



The Reverend  
**THOMAS JONES, M.A.**  
*Late Chaplain of St. Saviour*  
**SOUTHWARK.**

*Jenkins Pinxit 1757.*

*T. Kitchen Sculpsit.*





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THE  
WORKS  
OF THE  
Rev. THOMAS JONES, M.A. *K*  
*Late* Chaplain of St. Saviour, Southwark.

To which is prefixed,  
A Short ACCOUNT of his LIFE,  
IN A  
RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

By the Rev. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M A.  
Lecturer of *St. Dunstan's* in the *West*.

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The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish  
foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the  
power of God. 1 Cor. i. 18.

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The SECOND EDITION.

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L O N D O N :  
Printed for EDWARD DILLY, in the Poultry.  
M.DCC.LXIII.



THE  
OF THE

REAR ADMIRAL THOMAS JONES, M.A.



Presented to the British Museum by the

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## P R E F A C E.

ANY of Mr. Jones's friends desired  
M to see his single sermons collected,  
and published in a volume. And  
upon being applied to for that purpose, I was very ready to oblige them; because I should hereby have an opportunity of shewing my gratitude to the memory of my dear brother, and also of doing some good to precious souls, and to the interest of our Lord's kingdom, which was his end and aim in preaching and printing these sermons, and with the same view, I trust, they are now re-published.

The subjects treated of in them are of the greatest importance. Some of the leading points are these—the universal corruption of mankind by the fall, their guilt, misery and helplessness, for all have sinned, and all are by nature the children of wrath. Then follows the gracious method contrived by the eternal Three of bringing many sons unto glory by Jesus Christ. This was revealed

upon the fall, described in plain words, and represented in significant types and figures, until the fulness of time came, when God sent forth his Son made of a woman and made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law: and he did redeem them by doing the will of his Father—"Lo, I come," says he, to do thy will O God," which he did by obeying the precepts of the law, and by suffering the penalties of it, even unto death; and he was declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead. Then it appeared to a demonstration, that by his life and death he had made a full, perfect and sufficient atonement for sin, and had brought in everlasting righteousness, by which he is now able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.

Mr. Jones has also in these sermons treated largely of the office of the Holy Spirit in the covenant of grace. It is by his influence that any sinners are convinced of the fall, and of their guilt, misery, and helplessness. It is by his inward teaching, that the word heard becomes effectual to convince them of the all-sufficiency of the remedy provided in Christ Jesus. He takes of the things of Christ, and explains them to the understanding, and enforces them upon the conscience, whereby the sinner is made to see, that if he was a true believer, there is full and plenteous redemption for him. By the grace of the Holy Spirit



Spirit he is enabled to believe truly to the saving of his soul; which faith operates in his life and conversation, looking up to Jesus for strength to subdue sin, and satan, and the world, and living upon Jesus for daily victory over them. In short, whatever is promised to be done in the wakening sinners, the quickening believers, uniting them to Jesus, and keeping them united to him, enabling them to walk after his example, and giving them grace to hold out unto the end, all this is the work of the Spirit Jehovah in the covenant of grace.

As to the style of these discourses, and the manner of the composition, it does not become me to force my judgment upon the public. Let them speak for themselves. Mr. Jones was aware of their wanting many ornaments, which false taste admires, and has accordingly made his apology in the preface to the sermons upon the catechism. He had little time to study the fine turned period, or the pointed sentence, and he did not think the gospel stood in need of the arts of human oratory to recommend it. He endeavoured to profit, more than to please. And as his labours were chiefly among his own parishioners, he believed the importance of gospel truths plainly delivered and enforced would be more useful, than any enticing words of man's wisdom. Upon this plan he composed the sermons in this volume; and they were



drawn out into public view at the earnest intreaty and sollicitation of his hearers; to whom he gave them up as they were preached. He could not prevail with himself to refine their manner, or to polish their style; and this their present plainness is with me a great recommendation. The matter is of far more consequence, than the manner: for what is the end of preaching, but to profit the hearers? And they are not profited by the excellency of speech or of wisdom, but by the demonstration of the spirit and of power; which did certainly accompany those plain discourses, when delivered from the pulpit: may the same accompany them from the press!

With the author of these discourses I had a long and intimate acquaintance, having known him about the time that he became serious, and having lived in close friendship with him to the day of his death. Of what related to God's gracious dealings with his soul I have given an account in his funeral sermon; and as to other particulars of his life, it is of no consequence to lay them before the public. However I shall repeat two or three things, which tend to exalt the glory of God, and to encourage sinners to seek, and weak believers to rely upon, that rich grace of Jesus Christ, which bringeth salvation, free, full, perfect, eternal salvation, as our deceased brother has happily experienced. Before the  
Lord

Lord was pleased to call him he was walking in the error of his ways, like others, who know not God. Such is the condition of mankind since the fall, that there is none righteous, no not one, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one; not one of them can do any good, till grace come; and when it comes, it first discovers this their guilty helpless state, and convinces them of it, in order that they may be willing to receive their deliverance freely from the mercy of God, and to give him all the glory of it in time and in eternity. No wonder then that the time was, when our brother walked, as other men also walk, in the vanity of his mind, having his understanding darkened, and being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in him, because of the blindness of his heart. Of this God made him deeply sensible, and he was never ashamed to own it. His first awakening was by the gradual working of the law upon his conscience. It was not by outward means, such as hearing the word preached, or by some afflicting providence, sickness, trouble, or the like, but by the inward conviction of sin, that the Spirit of God wrought upon his conscience. He had his strongest convictions, in those places and times, where he had not



the benefit of any outward means. The views which he had hereby of his state and danger were very deep and very distressing. While he was under this soul-concern my acquaintance first began with him. And since that time, which is about eight years ago, our great intimacy and friendship has given me a constant opportunity of being a witness of God's gracious dealings with his soul. He went mourning for a long time, bowed down under the sense of guilt and the power of unbelief. In this school of humiliation he learnt self-knowledge. Here he was taught the sad effect of a ruined spoiled nature, of a soul depraved in all its faculties, and estranged from the mind and will of God, and governed by its own corrupt and stubborn will, commanding the body to give up its members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. Here he was taught what sin is, namely the transgression of the law, which is exceeding sinful, because the law is holy, just and good, a perfect copy of the divine perfections. Here he was taught the damnable nature of heart-sin, which is the fountain, from which all sin flows, and which in the heart of the natural man is ever flowing over. He learnt these lessons with such a deep experience, that the impression lasted all his days. For when God shewed him great mercy, and he was enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus, yet still he found nothing of himself wherein to glory. Hum-  
ble



ble and low in his own eyes, he was ready to give the honour to whom alone honour was due. Yea, after he was greatly strengthened and established, so as to live by faith on the Son of God, still he knew that all was mercy. Mercy, free mercy had from him all the praise. And this was so much the same and abiding temper of his mind, that it appeared on all occasions. His spiritual friends and acquaintance can bear me witness, that he was clothed with humility, and that he walked humbly with his God. A demonstration this, that he had found mercy, because he had made it the end and aim of his life to shew forth the praises of that free mercy, which he had so freely received; and as he lived, so he died, acknowledging himself an object of mercy. One of his last sayings was—"I am of the church of the first born who shall stand on mount Sion—One chosen from among my brethren—A sinner saved, a sinner saved."

Reader, if thou knowest what sin is, here is encouragement for thee to rely upon the mercy of God promised in Christ Jesus. Thou seest in our brother's case, how able, how willing Jesus is to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him. Come then to the Lord Christ, just as thou art, weary and heavy laden, and thou hast his word which cannot be broken, to assure thee, that thou shalt find rest unto thy soul. May he enable

enable thee to trust his word, that thou mayst not be faithless, but believing.

Reader, if thou art a weak believer, hear what the Lord did for the establishment of our brother's faith, and may thine grow while thou art reading about his. By faith the christian is engrafted, as a branch, into the true vine. And as the branch receives sap and juices from the stock, into which it is engrafted, to bring forth leaves, and fair blossoms and ripe fruit : so does the christian receive from the Lord Christ by virtue of union with him proper influence and nourishment to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Our brother was a fruitful branch. He did not seek to bear fruit to make himself alive : the fruit does not make the tree alive : but to testify his love and gratitude, to do good to men, and above all to fulfill what is written—  
“ Herein is my Father glorified, says Christ, that ye bear much fruit.” John xv. 8. that ye keep faith so constantly in act and exercise upon me, as to be always receiving out of my fulness grace for grace : for life and the acts of life in every grace are in and from me, and the more you live by faith upon me, the more will my Father be glorified. This was what Mr. Jones happily experienced in his heart and in his life. Whoever believeth aright with his heart will be kept in an humble dependance upon God, and in calling upon him to fulfill the promises of grace and strength

strength in every hour of need : So that the promises, freely made in Christ, may be freely made good thro' Christ. While he is in this right frame the soul lives out of itself, it sees nothing of its own to trust to or to rest in, but puts forth the empty hand to be constantly filled out of Christ's fulness. A person who lives thus by faith will be humble in heart. Every act of this faith declares his emptiness and want of all spiritual good, while it leads to Christ for his promised supply. And this was remarkably our brother's case : He was humble indeed. The witnesses are as many as knew him, and when there could be no view in deceiving any body, when he was waiting for his dissolution, he demonstrated how greatly the Lord had humbled him. He told me in his last sickness, when I discoursed with him about the state of his soul, that as a dying man he had nothing to trust to but the righteousness of Jesus Christ : and that his faith in it had been so strengthened in his illness, that he had not one doubt or fear. But how much he was emptied of self, and enabled to live in an humble dependance upon the grace and strength of Christ will best appear from his life, in which thro' faith many precious fruits were produced.

The principal work of a believer throughout his christian walk is the mortifying of the old man of sin, and the quickening and strengthening of the new man. So long as we are in this mortal body, every day must



this work be repeated. The flesh will be lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh : and he that is spiritual not only believes in the merit of Christ's death to save him from the guilt, but is also enabled to apply the power and efficacy of his death to subdue and crucify the dominion of those lustings. Subdued they must be. They must not reign. The promise is, *sin*, inward as well as outward, *shall not have dominion over you*. The believer relying upon this promise proclaims war against all inward lusts and risings of sin, and sets upon them in the power and strength of the Lord ; and so long as he looks up to Christ for fresh succours, he will be kept safe. As the old man is thus subdued, the new man is enabled more powerfully to put forth the proper acts of his spiritual life : for the deadening of the one is the quickening of the other. Of this spiritual conflict I have often read, especially in an excellent treatise of Dr. Owen's *upon indwelling sin* ; but I learnt most of it by experience, by many sore and daily conflicts in my own soul, and by frequent conversation with our dear brother. He was much exercised this way, and the Lord did wonders for him in giving him grace to crucify the old man of sin. God's great love appeared in his great chastenings : for whom he loveth he chasteneth. He refines all his people in the furnace of afflictions. There our brother had been refining for some years, and much  
dross

drofs had been done away. Because he was precious in the sight of the Lord, he was tried, like gold, and purified seven times in the fire. For some years past he was afflicted with a disorder which kept him low, and often brought him to death's door. During these years his growth in grace was very evident to all his spiritual friends. We could see a manifest victory gained over the old man, whose power was weakened in his members which are upon the earth. He grew also dead to the world, and experienced what the apostle means, when he says, *The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.* Its pleasures, its riches, its honours were nothing to him. He did not despise them because he could not get them, but he parted with them freely, when he had them in his own power. God had provided for him a comfortable maintenance, but he laid up nothing, except for the poor, to whom he gave liberally of what he had, and with a willing mind. As to honour, he wanted not that which was from men. He was led to choose a better. He has it now. And this deadness to the world was of great use to him when he came to die. Then he had the comfort of it, as appeared from that sweet expression of his on his death bed. "It is not dying out of the world, but dying in the world, and parting with all its toys and trifles, and that not with sickness or pain." And being thus by faith dead to the world while in it, what should make him



him afraid to die out of it? He had been so long kept under the cross, that it had been the means of crucifying the world unto him, of subduing his own will and his own tempers, of trying his faith, and of exercising his patience. In this school of affliction he was enabled to profit greatly. Therein he learnt resignation to the will of God, which made him under his long and great weakness of body kiss the rod and be thankful, and which delivered him from impatience, fretfulness, murmuring, and those selfish tempers, that want to have our will, and not God's to be done. There he learnt to live by faith upon Christ in all his offices, as a prophet to teach him wisdom to lead him to God, as a priest to bring him near to God by his atoning blood and righteousness, and as a king to keep him near to God, ruling in him and over him. This faith was tried, and it grew by trials. The more it was exercised the more did he find of the safety and happiness of living by faith upon the Son of God. And hereby he learnt what the patience of the saints is. Patience is an act of faith under outward afflictions, looking up to God for grace to hold out, as long as the afflictions last. Thus did our brother's patience. Under a long illness he was never heard to murmur; and upon his death bed he was afraid of nothing but impatience; and God out of the tenderest love kept him, until patience had done its perfect work.

As



As the cross was thus made profitable to the mortification of the old man, so was it to the quickening and strengthening of the new man. He had many precious graces, but don't mistake me. Whatever Mr. Jones had, except sin, he had it from Christ; whose love to him I would magnify from the greatness of the blessings bestowed. You could not converse with him without being put in mind of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. In his behaviour, in his conversation he shewed, that he had put on as one of the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, long-suffering; ready to bear with others, and ready to forgive, as Christ had also freely forgiven him. These amiable graces of the new man appeared in all his conduct; and particularly when he stood up to minister in holy things, one might discover throughout great kindness and tender love to precious souls. His own flock, to whom the Lord had made him an overseer, was much upon his heart. How earnest have I often heard him in prayer for them? And to the last he did not forget them. In his sickness he would be often crying out, "Lord feed thy sheep, Lord feed thy sheep." He was always studying and contriving something, that might be useful to their best interest. There is an alms-house in the parish called the college, and some small stipend for doing duty in it. Mr. Jones thought it was not  
right

right to take the money, unless he did the duty. Accordingly he began to read prayers, and to expound the scripture in the college chapel, and went on for some time. The congregation used to be very large, and the success was very great. Many souls were in this place first awakened, who are now walking in the faith and fear of God, adorning the gospel of our Saviour. But here he was stopt and refused the use of the chapel. After this he set up a weekly lecture in his church, but he had not preached it long, before he was denied the use of the pulpit. However he was not discouraged; he went on giving away good books, some of which he carried in person to every house in the parish; catechising the children, who came weekly to his house for that purpose; and paying religious visits among his parishioners, when they used to talk freely of the state of their souls. By these methods he tried to win his people to Christ, beside the stated duties of his office; in performing of which he seemed to set God always before him, and to be greatly drawn out in love to his hearers, of whom a very great number I trust did frequent his ministry, not led thither by the ease of his delivery, the sweetness of his voice, or the smoothness of his periods, but because they felt the weight and importance of the doctrines preached. Several I am myself acquainted with, who will I hope be his joy and



and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus, who hearing him preach upon the entire ruin of man by the fall, were convinced that they were in this state, and upon the entire recovery of man through Jesus Christ were enabled by his word and spirit to believe in him for righteousness, and to live upon him for grace to walk, as he also walked. I mention not these things to set him above any of the Lord's ministers. He had no such thoughts when living. No one could think more meanly of himself, than he did. And God forbid that I should intend to lessen others by exalting him. No, Grace, free grace is all I want to exalt. As he was adorned with so many graces in his private life, and with so many public gifts, who should have the praise, but the giver of them all, even that good God who shewed him mercy, and in whose sight he was so precious as to have his marvellous loving kindness continued even unto death. For how could God shew his love to him upon his dying bed, more than he did? Although his fever was violent for seven days, yet his soul was still and calm. He was not troubled with any fear of death; that was kindly taken away. He had no doubt concerning his eternal state. He was made patient to God's will, bore pain without murmuring, and waited the Lord's time for his release. Were not these undoubted proofs of God's special love to him? He suffered his faith to



be tried in the fire, that it might come out, like gold, purer and brighter; and it stood the fire, rejoiced in it, and was refined by it. In one of his weakest hours he said, "Blessed be the Lord for that degree of faith, which he hath given me, tho' it has operated in so weak a manner, yet I have many blessed and comfortable marks in my own soul of his love to me." Here was faith and much humility. He could find nothing in himself to put the least trust in as to his acceptance with God, and therefore his trust was stronger in Christ. This shewed itself in what he said on his death bed, "What an unfelt, what an unthought of corruption is here both in body and soul," he felt more of it, and in a greater degree than he had ever thought of before, and yet this deep sense of his corruption did not drive him from Christ, but made his faith cleave the closer to him; "My flesh and my heart faileth, saith he, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." His ground for this he declared was "a covenant of mercy, free grace in the Lord Jesus." In which knowing that he had his share, he could say, "Now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. —Now, Lord, I can lay me down in peace and safely take my rest." And this hope did not fail him. God was with him when he died, so that he had no evil to fear, when he went down into the valley and shadow of death.

death. His body was left to rest in peace, and his soul is, as we have good grounds to believe, with that innumerable company, who are standing round the throne, and praising God and the lamb for ever and ever.

Reader, this is a little sketch of Mr. Jones's christian life and death. And what thinkest thou of him? Is thy life like his? Art thou living by faith upon the Son of God, as he did? If thou art, the Lord strengthen thy faith, and keep thee by his mighty power, until thou receive eternal salvation.

But if this be not thy case, where art thou? In the world, and amidst all its schemes and pursuits? What! art thou seeking happiness in those things, which perish in the using, and neglecting the happiness that cometh from God? Ask thyself, must I not die? Perhaps soon? And what will all the world profit me, if I lose mine own soul? Think a little about this, and unless thou art resolved to destroy thyself, why wilt thou exchange eternity for time, or the joys of heaven for all the pleasures of the world?

Perhaps thou sayest, I desire to live and die with the righteous. If thy desires be true and from thy heart, thou hast been convinced of thine own unrighteousness, and of the impossibility of obtaining happiness in any other way, than by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. If so, then thou hast been enabled to say, "I do believe," yet art continually

forced to pray, " Lord help my unbelief." And has not the reading Mr. Jones's experience suited thy case and encouraged thee still to wait upon the Lord? For what had he to recommend him more than thou hast? Nothing at all. And yet thou seest how happy he was in the Lord living and dying. Why then dost thou doubt, O thou of little faith? Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and he will do thee good, and whatever is promised in his word shall be made thine by believing.

And now, Reader, I commend thee to God and to the word of his grace, praying him to make thee wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus; for whose sake I am thy soul's well-wisher,

26 JY 60

Lambeth,  
January 11, 1763.

W. Romaine.



AN  
EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
CHURCH CATECHISM,  
IN  
EIGHT DISCOURSES.

Delivered at  
The PARISH-CHURCH of ST. SAVIOUR,  
SOUTHWARK,

In the Year M.DCC.LV.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

JOHN LLOYD, JUNIOR, Esq;

M.D.

And Wm. Lloyd, Esq;

EXPOSITION

OF THE

CHURCH



RIGHT DISCOURSES.

Delivered at

The Parish-Church of St. SAVOURN,

Southwark,

in the Year M.DCC.LV.

for the

THE FOURTH EDITION.

TO  
JOHN LLOYD, jun. Esq;

My Dear FRIEND,

And Worthy BENEFACTOR,

S I R,

I Must beg your acceptance of the following exposition, as a testimony of my gratitude for that friendship you have so long honoured me with, and for the many instances of it I have received at your hands.

Be not afraid of a dedication, for I give you my promise, you shall not hear a word of fulsome panegyric. Flattery, you are sensible was always my aversion, and my affection for *you* is too strong to urge it upon you.

I need not inform my dear friend, that it gives me more pleasure to dedicate this little performance to himself, than to have the greatest man living for my patron. As it is impossible for me to make a suitable return for the many favours you have conferred on me, with this world's goods, give me leave, my dear Sir, to recommend the following sheets to your perusal ; wherein, I hope, you will find something, which (under God) may prove an advantage to your best and noblest part.

You see, Sir, my gratitude is wing'd with ambition, and disdains a trivial service, as a test of its sincerity. I am persuaded it will give you more satisfaction than an hundred



compliments, when I tell you, it is my earnest prayer to God, that the friendship which begun in our earliest youth, and has subsisted between us to this day, may be cemented with the love of JESUS, and that you may experience the comforts of that gospel, the whole scheme of which you at present believe and admire.

I have another reason for prefixing your name to this production, which is, to allure some of the companions of my former mirth and gaiety, to give it the reading; and I know no way so likely as by prefixing the name of one, of whom they all entertain the highest opinion, and to whose judgment they pay the greatest deference.

Excuse me, Sir, if I appear impertinent in this address, as my only end is, to proclaim my gratitude for such favours as few but yourself would have bestowed; and to recommend to your attention, what, under God, may be a blessing to your soul.

I shall take my leave with my sincere prayers that all the qualities of the gentleman and the friend (which center in Mr. *Lloyd*) may be still more heightened by the graces of the gospel of Christ.

26 JY 60

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend,

And obliged humble Servant,

Castle-Street,  
Jan. 16, 1756.

T. JONES.

## P R E F A C E.

*THE following Sermons were intended to have been completed in the last season of Lent; but, on account of various interruptions, the year was pretty far advanced before they were all delivered.*

*I have reason to think they were greatly blessed from the pulpit, and my hope that they may be made still more useful from the press, is my only apology for their publication. I would have it observed, that they are not intended for the polite scholar, nor for men of profound learning, but they are solely designed for the plain humble Christian, who is willing to be instructed (in the plainest manner) in the principles of Christ's religion.—If any person expects to be entertained in the following Exposition with elegance of style or dignity of sentiment, he will be greatly disappointed: These discourses were at first delivered to a plain congregation, and for the use of such they are principally intended. The subject-matter of them I am ready to defend, altho' it may not be so easy to defend the style and manner in which it is delivered.*

*That*

*That the infidels will disapprove of the following subjects is no more than I expect. But as I write not to convince them, but to confirm and establish the believer in Jesus; I shall not think myself obliged to take notice of any objections that may be started from that quarter.*

*I am likewise prepared for the reception these Sermons will unavoidably meet with from the formal professors, and learned Pharisees of the age. But their anger will give me no concern. Why should they be angry with a brother for desiring to press forward to that which is within the vail, because they themselves are contented to abide in the outer courts? Let them rest and depend on mere form and outward shew, if they can; but they ought not to be displeased with such as prefer the substance to the shadow, and desire to enjoy inward peace, as well as to make an outward profession. That my manner of treating the subject before me is by no means equal to its dignity and importance I readily allow: And that many will be offended with the flatness of the stile, I suppose. To such as these, I must repeat what I said before; I write not for them, but for the plain serious Christian: I do not desire to please the fancies, but to affect the hearts of all my readers.*

*It may, perhaps, be admitted for an apology, that few (if any one) of these Sermons were so much as begun till the day before they were delivered. I seldom  
begin*



*begin to compose my sermons till Saturday in the afternoon, and often not till late in the evening. I have such a variety of business of a private as well as public nature on my hands, that I can never find time to embellish my discourses with pretty conceits, nor smooth language, but am obliged to send them abroad into the world in puris naturalibus. I have said more than I intended by way of apology for the meanness of the performance: And if this should not give satisfaction, it will be needless to attempt it by saying any thing farther. I am sensible every disciple of the blessed Jesus will peruse this Exposition with candour, and readily overlook its imperfections. If it should be useful to such, or the means of speaking peace to any one soul, I have my reward, and am quite regardless of the epithets Hutchinsonian, Methodist, and Enthusiast, which some people think it their interest liberally to bestow on every man who dares to own that he hopes for and expects, a free salvation through the alone merits of JESUS CHRIST our Redeemer.*

26 JY 60



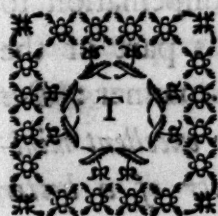
A N  
E X P O S I T I O N  
O F T H E  
Church Catechism, &c.

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S E R M O N I.

H E B. Chap. viii. Part of the 10th verse.

*I will put my laws into their minds, and will write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.*



THESE words were originally spoken by the prophet *Jeremiah*, and are applied by the author of this epistle to the christian covenant, to the second covenant, which was established on better promises than the former, by reason of the precious death and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. The principal thing aimed at in this epistle is, to convince the Jews (to whom it

was



was addressed of the exact correspondence and agreement there is between the law and the gospel; to prove, that every circumstance and ceremony of the mosaic law were designed as so many pictures or representations of Jesus Christ, and his atoning for the sins of the world; and that every single passage in the life of Christ, and every circumstance of his death, exactly answered and referred to those figurative predictions of him contained in the law. Thus did the one dispensation exhibit and illustrate the other; and the perfect harmony and agreement between them is the general subject of this epistle.

But, however striking a picture of the redemption of man by Christ Jesus was drawn in the law, yet we are to observe it was no more than a picture, and fell very short of the original; it was *a shadow only of good things to come, and not the very image nor substance of them: the law made nothing perfect; that was preserved for the bringing in a better hope, which hope was brought in through the gospel.* And the superiority of the gospel dispensation to the Jewish law is described (in this part of the epistle) in a very strong masterly manner: *But now hath he (Christ) obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises; for if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been found for the second. For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come,*  
*saith*

*saieth the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant I made with their fathers, in the days when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord; for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after these days, saith the Lord.*

*I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.*

This is God's promise to his faithful people: and it has been fulfilled, and still continues to be fulfilled, in and through Jesus Christ.

In my following discourse I shall endeavour to explain the christian covenant, not only as my text naturally leads me to it; but also because the christian covenant is the first thing delivered in our *Church Catechism*: for it is my intention (with the divine blessing and assistance) to employ this season of *Lent* in an explanation of that excellent and truly christian system of divinity. As this useful piece of instruction has the word of God for its authority and foundation, and contains whatever is necessary for christians to know and experience, in order to eternal salvation; an exposition of it, I hope, will not be thought improper nor unnecessary. As 'tis impossible to bring such an explanation within the limits of one discourse, I propose to compleat it in this season of

*Lent*; which, as it is set apart for public humiliation, so is it no improper season for such an exercise as this; as, I presume, we shall every one of us find that we have come very short of what is required of us in this *Catechism*, and which we have solemnly engaged to fulfil; and consequently shall see abundant reason to be humbled under a sense of our own weakness and wickedness.

For if once the law of God is set home with power on our consciences, if once we are brought to see how grossly we have violated it, we shall not fail to be thoroughly humbled and afflicted for it. And, though the terrors of the Lord ought ever to be urged home upon sinners, yet no season is more proper for it, than that which is thus set apart for public humiliation and repentance before God: In this present season then it is my intention to lay before you what is the sum and substance of those great blessings and privileges which are laid down in our excellent *Church Catechism*, and which we must be partakers of, and experience in this life, ere we can be admitted to eternal glory in the world to come.

And may the almighty spirit of God accompany these discourses! May his gracious influences attend them to all our hearts! May he water all our souls with the dew of his heavenly grace, and make them open to conviction, and willing to receive instruction! May he remove all prejudice against his gospel, and incline our hearts to receive



ceive with meekness that true word of life which is able to make us *wise unto salvation*!

In this discourse I shall endeavour to explain the first part of the christian covenant; and may the influences of the same good spirit be with us in this exercise!

The method I propose to observe as I go along is, first, to explain the parts I shall be upon, and then to make a practical application of them to ourselves.

The first thing treated of in this system is the christian covenant, or the gracious designs of God displayed in the covenant of our redemption by Jesus Christ; into which profession we have been baptized, and are under baptismal obligations to discard the old man, and to put on the new. We were at that time invested with a new (and from thence called our christian) name. As we are called after our parents in the flesh, so we are hereby to be called after Christ in the Spirit; as we receive one appellation from our earthly parents, we have another imparted to us by those who undertook to appear as our spiritual parents: These sureties promise and engage, in the presence of God, and are answerable to God, (O! consider this, ye that take this solemn charge upon you) for our being instructed in our christian profession, and for our being made acquainted with the great and glorious privileges unto which we are baptized; that so, by the grace of God, and through

the assistance of his spirit, we may renounce the *Devil*, the world, and the flesh, and from an experience of the present salvation of Jesus Christ in this life, we may be admitted to a state of eternal salvation and glory in his heavenly kingdom. From hence these sureties are called godfathers and godmothers, from them we receive our christian name, and to their care it is (or ought to be) owing that we are made sensible of the high privileges our profession entitles us to.

This privilege we are informed of in the next place, in answer to the second question, enquiring, "Who gave us our name?" The answer is, My "godfathers and godmothers in my baptism; " wherein I was made a member of Christ, a " child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom " of heaven." Great and glorious privileges indeed! And, first, every christian (I mean every real, not a nominal christian only) is a member of Christ.

" We are all by nature born in sin, and are the " children of wrath;" as is expressed in another part of this catechism.

There is no independent state wherein man is at liberty to chuse for himself, and determine his actions by the rule of his own will. This exists no where but in the heads of our *moral* gentlemen, who look on man as perfect and entire, *wanting nothing*, and capable of obtaining happiness, by following the dictates of his own reason. These  
men,

men, will never terrify you with any harsh and severe doctrines; but, in the tenderest and softest manner imaginable, recommend it to you to tread in the primrose paths of virtue, and not to skait in the slippery tracks of vice. I am sensible this is the polite taste for preaching, and the only way to be admired and respected: But, notwithstanding all this, if we believe our bibles, we can never come into their scheme, pretty and entertaining as it is. The scriptures tell us a very different story; and, among many proofs of the genuineness and authenticity of the scripture, this is not the least, that they never pay their court to our vanity, they flatter not our pride nor our passions; but deliver the most severe and home truths in the plainest and freest manner. And, besides, we can be convinced of the truth of that description of man in the holy scriptures, by what we find in our own breasts: for all our imaginary perfection, all the so-much boasted dignity of human nature, and all the strict conformity to the rule of moral rectitude, and the eternal fitness of things, exists only in idea. The system is too fine to be reduced to practice, and is only a kind of *Utopia*, or ideal state, which never is, never was, nor ever will be.

Let us therefore attend to the holy scriptures, which we (are vulgar enough to) look on, as containing the true word and will of God; let us



*hearken what the Lord God saith concerning us in these pages; and they tell us, that we are all gone out of the way;—that we are altogether corrupt, and become abominable;—that there is none righteous, no not one;—that we all, in Adam's transgression, fell;—that his sin is imputed to us;—that in Adam all die;—that we are aliens to God, and strangers to the covenant of promise: they inform us that our nature is very corrupt, and our boasted reason greatly vitiated and depraved;—that in consequence of Adam's fall, we are all, by nature, in a state of rebellion against God;—that the case of every natural man is such, that he cannot, by any thing he can do, restore himself to the favour of God, nor recover the image he lost in Adam.*

This is the religion of nature, and whoever would be better acquainted with it, need only peruse the fifty-third *Psalms*, or the first chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*, and there they may see the dignity of human nature set forth in its true and proper colours.

Our natures, therefore, must be cleansed and renewed; in short, we must be accepted in Christ Jesus. This gracious Redeemer undertook and effected our cure: he proposed himself in our stead; and, by his perfect obedience and meritorious death, the designs of our common enemy were defeated. There is no way to recover the favour of God, but in and through him. As we are by nature in the most wretched and deplorable

rable state, so, if Christ vouchsafe to look on us as *he passeth by* us, we shall surely live; by virtue, and for the sake of his crucified body, we shall be received into his mystical body. Christ has a glorified body in heaven, and a mystical body on earth; this body is his *church*, or congregation of all faithful christians, however dispersed or distressed over the face of the whole earth. All these souls are collected by our Redeemer into one mystical body, or society, united under him, who is the *head*; he preserves them entire, and protects them from harm. However particular churches or individuals may fall away, through their own wickedness and unbelief, yet the Lord has promised he will always have a church upon earth, a company of people believing on him, and closely united to him; he has promised to be always with it, and has declared, that (whatever persecutions it may be exercised with, yet) it shall never be destroyed, and *the gates of hell shall never prevail against it*; and as the body which is composed of many members is, nevertheless, but one body, so this collective body of *christian believers in Jesus*, though it consists of many persons, of different members, yet it constitutes one body or society, under Christ the head, and they *are all members in particular*.

From this natural image of the advantages arising from the natural body being sound and entire in all its parts, we receive a spiritual idea of the

great and precious advantages which arise from christians being united to Christ: As life, and heat, and health are derived to every member by its being joined to the body, so are pardon, peace, and sanctifying grace, imparted to every soul that is united to this body or church of Christ: he holds them all as *stars in his right hand*, and will protect and defend them from all evil; and, as a limb when severed from the body is rendered useless, becomes putrid, and is no more than a piece of unanimated clay, so every individual person, (let men flatter and deceive themselves as much as they will) every single person who is severed from this body, or which is the same, is not united to Jesus Christ, and has no fellowship nor interest in him, is in every respect absolutely dead; he can derive no spiritual life from Christ the head, and, being without God in the world, is *dead while he liveth*; let him do what he will, let him boast ever so much of his own abilities, he cannot take one single step in the way to heaven. He may indeed talk of his own works, he may flatter himself they will justify him: so a man who has had both his legs cut off may set them up and bid them run a race, but they would not be quite so obedient to his commands as he would desire. Now just the same blunder do those men commit who recommend it to a sinner who is *dead in trespasses and sins*, and separate from Christ, to *work out his own salvation*. Because  
every



every good and perfect gift comes from God. It is his spirit who inspires good thoughts and actions, and this grace flows only in and through Christ Jesus to such as are united to him; or, to speak in the words of our catechism, to such as are *members of Christ*.

How deplorable must their case be who are estranged from him? How happy those who are thus united to him! Here we see what God is willing to do for us; and, oh, that we may be made willing to seek for and accept it! For the particulars now under consideration are, the gracious covenant designs, and merciful promises which God has been graciously pleased to make to sinful man, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

God has promised to restore lost sinners to favour, and to make them *members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven*. These are the blessed privileges God has engaged in the new covenant to bestow, in consideration of what our Redeemer, has done and suffered for us, (for all spiritual blessings flow from him.) Through the gospel dispensation, we who were strangers are made friends with God; we, who by nature were wild olive trees, are grafted into the true olive tree; we, who were afar off, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ; every thing which might obstruct our happiness is done away in Christ; sin is atoned for and pardoned by his

blood; all repenting and returning sinners will be joined to the Saviour Jesus Christ, and will be freed from all pollution; they will be incorporated into the body of Jesus Christ, or his faithful people, and will derive all spiritual life and grace from him; they will partake of his divine nature and influence, as the members do of that of the natural body; they will no longer wander out of the way, but, being brought home to their proper sheepfold, they will be constantly under the eye of the blessed and adorable Jesus, that *good shepherd and bishop of their souls*. This is one privilege obtained by Jesus Christ for sinful men; and, when we accept the gracious offers, we shall be no longer dead to spiritual things; we shall be no longer weeds, fit for nothing but the fire; but, being grafted into this tree of life, we shall not fail to bring forth fruit abundantly.

This privilege is conveyed to those who are baptized, not with water only, but also *with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*. But the nature and efficacy of baptism will be considered in a future discourse, when I come to treat of it as a sacrament. The next thing those who are thus born again are made partakers of is, to become the sons of God; every converted christian is hereby made a child of God. As by nature we are *children of wrath* and heirs of hell, so by grace we are made children of God and heirs of glory. This is owing likewise to what our Redeemer has undertook for us, and  
applies

applies to us by the operation of his spirit. *We are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus,* (saith the apostle) God sends forth the spirit of his Son into his childrens hearts, whereby they cry, *Abba Father.* They are no longer looked on by him as his avowed enemies, but stand in the amiable light of children to him; *and, if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* As a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful to those that love and fear him: as parents nourish and support their children with all imaginable care and tenderness, so doth God nourish and support his spiritual children: he provides for all their wants, he fills their souls with his grace and strength, and supplies their bodies with the gifts of his providence, as children are accustomed to rely entirely on their parents, and to depend on their care for nourishment and support, so do all sincere christians rely entirely on God! they look up to him for *pardon and peace* to their souls, and depend on his providence and blessing upon their endeavours to supply their bodily wants. He corrects them in love when they depart from him, but always, in the *midst of judgment remembers mercy.* As kind and tender parents not only take care of the present helpless condition of their offspring, but also provide for their future maintenance, so does the gracious God and Father of mercies; he not only gives his children constant supplies of grace suited to their present need,



need, he not only protects them in their infant state, directs them in the way they should go, and supplies all their present wants, but also provides for their future welfare; when they have arrived to a *perfect man*, they will not be destitute of a sure possession; there is an inheritance reserved for them in the kingdom of glory.

And this is the third privilege every regenerate soul is invested with: for, in consideration of Christ's atonement, the believer is made *a member of Christ, a child of God*, and also *an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven*. *Fear not, little flock*, (saith our blessed Redeemer) *for it is your father's good pleasure to give you a kingdom*. Thus are all those who are united to Christ, fellow-citizens with the saints, and free denizens of heaven; they are entitled to the kingdom which Christ their Redeemer hath purchased for them; they have a right conveyed to them, which is sealed by their Saviour's blood. However they are despised and afflicted here, they can look forward by faith to the rest reserved for them, to those mansions of glory which are prepared for all those who *love the Lord Jesus in sincerity*. What an amazing act of mercy, what a wonder of love is this! for poor sinful earth and ashes to be raised to such high and glorious privileges, for vile, abandoned sinners to be made *members of Christ*, and to be admitted into a near relation and fellowship with him, for the children of sinful men to be made the children of God,

God, and to be owned and acknowledged by him; for the servants and captive slaves of Satan to be made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, and entitled to the glories there, is a wonder of mercy indeed. All who have *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, have sensibly experienced this to be really a monument of mercy. For we are to observe, all these inestimable gifts are entirely of God's *free grace* and mercy. God did not owe the world a Redeemer, but out of his unbounded and rich goodness hath he *made us accepted in the beloved*: It was his free grace alone that induced him to shew the compassionate regard he has to us, in the covenant of grace exhibited in and through Jesus Christ; after we had broken the first covenant in our head and representative, it was this pure and unlimited love that gave us another, established upon better promises. May we all be truly thankful for these great blessings purchased for us by the Lord Jesus Christ; by whom sinners are reconciled and brought home to God, are made the *children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven*! This is that part of the covenant in Christ Jesus that he has promised to bestow, and which he always does bestow on every sensible, heavy-laden, penitent sinner. Thus have I gone through with the first part of the christian covenant; and now I shall proceed, as I proposed, to make a practical application of what has been said to ourselves.

It

It nearly concerns us all to examine whether we have any share in the great privileges we have been considering. We call ourselves christians 'tis true, and we think we are very good christians, because we have been baptized: but, if we have received the outward ordinance, have we received the *inward and spiritual grace*? Have we been baptized with the Holy Ghost? Christianity is not an outward, formal religion, but a religion of the heart. A man may perform the outward ceremonies of religion, yea every one of them, and yet be a stranger to the inward life, virtue, and power of the gospel, and so be as far from the kingdom of God, as the most profligate and abandoned. Unless we are inwardly holy, outward profession is of no service. It matters not what benefits we are entitled to by baptism and profession, unless we are made partakers of, and enjoy them *now*. We have all broken our baptismal engagements; we have all divested ourselves of the benefits of, and forfeited the privileges annexed to baptism; we must therefore be solicitous to regain them.

Let us, my brethren, sincerely examine ourselves. Are we members of Christ? If so, we have the mind of Christ; we walk even as he walked, we depend entirely upon him; *the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world.*

Are



Are we the *children of God*? then are we *holy in all manner of conversation*; our life is *hid with Christ in God*; we study to please him, we enjoy the light of his countenance, we love him, we prefer his favour to every other object, we behave as obedient children.

Are we *inheritors of the kingdom of heaven*? If we are, *we with patience wait for it*; we look forward to the rest prepared for us. We are unmoved at the persecution and distress we meet with here, as knowing we must expect it: we look on ourselves as strangers and pilgrims here, and, in every action of our lives, *declare plainly, that we seek a better country*: In a word, *we are passed from death unto life: old things are done away, behold all things are become new. We have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, by Christ Jesus.*

But is this really the case? few of us, I fear, are thus converted and united to Christ; and yet, truth it is, (and however harsh it may sound) it is my bounden duty to declare it, that, unless we are thus made MEMBERS of Christ, CHILDREN of God, and INHERITORS of the kingdom of heaven, we have no part in the kingdom of Christ and of God; we are strangers to God, and, if we die in this unconverted estate, we shall never see the face of Almighty God, but must be banished his presence,

presence, and remain in the blackness of darkness for ever.

And now, my brethren, do we, (for I include myself) do we attend to these things with that seriousness their importance demands? Are we earnest and desirous of obtaining these privileges? For, unless we do obtain them, we are no more christians than a jew or a turk is a christian. Do we make the interest of our souls our first and greatest concern? On the contrary, does not the meat that perisheth engross our whole time and thoughts? Do we really believe we have souls to be saved? Why then do we trifle, when that trifling is attended with so much danger? In a word, Do we ever think of our eternal salvation? Do we strive to *enter in at the strait gate*? Do we see our own wickedness, and desire to be cloathed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ? Is pride, (that lurking remnant of original sin) is pride banished our breasts? Do we really see that we are poor and miserable sinners? If we do, *blessed are the eyes which see the things which we see*. If we are convinced of sin, we are not far from the kingdom of God; if we see our danger, the remedy is nigh at hand. Turn ye to the Lord Jesus, and he will not fail to speak peace unto your troubled, penitent souls. O! cry mightily unto him for pardon, and he hath promised to hear you. Wrestle by prayer with God, and do not let him go unless he bless you;

you ; beg forgiveness of your sins, implore the guidance of his holy spirit, to lead and conduct you *into all truth*.

Farther, if you are in earnest for your own souls, are you equally solicitous for the *children* and *servants* committed to your care ? Do you take care to instruct the ignorant ? Do you teach them the way of salvation ? Alas ! few of you (I fear) have found the way yourselves. O ! beg of God to open your eyes before it be too late. Remember, if the souls committed to your care perish for want of your instruction, *they indeed will die in their iniquity, but their blood will God require at your hands*.

My brethren, bear with me ; for, however disagreeable it may be, I am doing no more than my duty. Consider not who speaks, but what is spoken. It is certainly worth your while, for your own sakes, to consider whether these things are so. Be careful then to teach all committed to your care, what they are by nature, and what they must be made by grace, if ever they expect to see the face of God to their comfort. Be not contented because they are able to repeat the *catechism* by rote, (when not one in ten thousand of them knows any thing of the intent and meaning of it) but be solicitous that it may be imprinted on their hearts : use all means in your power to convince them of the necessity of a thorough change in their natures, so that they may become *members of Christ, children*  
of



*of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.* Beg of God direction to perform this; and that, while you are instructing them in the great truths of christianity, they may be imprinted on your own hearts. If ye are in earnest, and sincere in this important exercise, God will give you his blessing. I intreat this of you for your own sakes, and for those poor souls sakes who are committed to your charge: let them not *perish for lack of knowledge.*

If this freedom gives offence, I may say, *Is there not a cause?* For how few parents are there who take the least care of this? How few take half, nay, a tenth part of the pains that their children may be saved, which they do to make them come *genteely* into a room? Who takes half the pains to save their souls, as they do to teach them how to save their money? In short, who is there, that, by instruction, example, and all other means, take the pains for their salvation, as they do to destroy their bodies and souls in hell? God knows and sees the scandalous behaviour of too many parents and governors in this particular; and, I believe, the consciences of too many here present can witness to the truth of it. And yet all this while we are good christians! our works must justify us; we see no need of a *mediator*, nor the necessity of a better righteousness than our own to *justify* us, nor the want of supernatural power to *sanctify* us.

Now

Now I would only ask, is this, or is it not, the most abominable hypocrisy and mockery of God that creatures can possibly shew? What signifies coming to church, and attending outward ceremonies, while our hearts are thus indifferent, cold, and lifeless? Why, we may reap as much advantage in a *Turkish* mosque, or a Jews synagogue.

If we don't believe a word of christianity, if religion is only a *state trick*, let us throw off the mask, let us not be hypocrites, but, if we believe the gospel, for God's sake let us be in earnest, and not sleep upon the brink of the bottomless pit.

My beloved brethren, what I have said proceeds, I assure you, (and from my soul I speak it) from a true and real desire of *ministring to your salvation*. I am sensible offences will come. I wish I could wound you sensibly: For (to use the words of a great man " I must make you hate me, or hate " yourselves : you must either hate me for speak- " ing the truth, or hate your own sinful and " corrupted nature."

Since then these things are so, be persuaded to consider your ways and be wise: look through the weakness of the instrument that addresses you, and be convinced that God now calls you to repentance and amendment. Humble yourselves then under a sense of your sins, and beg of God to give you *pardon* and *peace* through Jesus Christ. All who are convinced of sin, who are in earnest in these points, and who are desirous of *God's redeeming love*, join

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your

your hearts with mine in supplication to the God of mercy for these things.

O merciful Lord, we, thy sinful and unworthy creatures, acknowledge, in all humility, our own vileness and insufficiency; be gracious therefore unto us. Take from us, O Lord, the heart of stone, and give us a heart of flesh! O be merciful to our sins and transgressions, and remember them no more: blot them out of thy book, and enable us to see them pardoned and forgiven *through the blood of the lamb!* Pour thy holy spirit upon us, that we may be enabled to serve and please thee in newness of life. Hear us, O Lord, for thy mercy is great; and, after the multitude of thy mercy, look upon us, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

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## S E R M O N II.

MARK, Chap. i. latter part of the 15th verse.

———*Repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

**T**H E S E words are the solemn invitation of Christ himself. Repentance and faith are what he preached to a sinful world, and these are what he still holds forth in his word to sinful man. *Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into*



into Gallilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Two things are recommended to us by our Redeemer in these words; the first is, conviction of sin, and returning to God, *repent ye*; the second is, a stedfast faith in Jesus Christ, *and believe the gospel*. These points will be the subject of my following discourse. Under these heads I shall endeavour to explain so much of our Church Catechism as relates to them.

And may the holy and eternal spirit be present with us, and accompany what shall now be delivered to the hearts of all here present.

First, then, I am to consider the work of conversion, or turning to God, *repent ye*.

In my last discourse I opened and set forth to you the nature of our redemption by Christ, and endeavoured to explain what our God has been graciously pleased to promise a performance of to all such as truly turn to him. You may remember I observed, that it is entirely owing to the riches of God's free grace and mercy that he made us any promises at all; we were all objects of his wrath, and he might (and that consistent with his justice) have left us in the deplorable state our very nature involves us in; but he has been pleased to find out a way of redemption for us, and to accept a propitiation in our stead; this propitiation

was made by the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, in whom alone we can be pardoned and accepted in God's sight.

In consideration of what our gracious Redeemer has done for us, God is pleased to convince us of our guilt and of our danger, to pardon our sin, to free us from the dominion of it, and to lead us from grace to glory, by the inspiration of his holy spirit: he has promised to make us members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. This is what God has been pleased to promise to all those who are made sensible of their want of this act of mercy, and are willing to embrace the free offer he makes them. But then we are to remember, 'tis to those only who are sensible of their want of it, who see their own insufficiency, and are desirous of his favour and love, that this monument of mercy is extended; we must be brought home by repentance, or conversion from sin, agreeably to the first part of the text, *repent ye*.

What this repentance is I shall endeavour to shew, and shall apply every head (as I go along) to our own particular cases.

I observed before, that we were admitted into the church by baptism, wherein our godfathers and godmothers entered into a solemn engagement on our behalf, and promised that we should ratify and confirm it when we arrived to years of discretion, and that to their care it is (or ought to be) owing

owing that we are acquainted with these things ; to which I shall now add, that all this is incumbent on us to observe, whether we had sureties in our baptism or no. This engagement is not of such a nature as to be cancelled at pleasure, without incurring the pains and penalties to be inflicted on the breach of it. Godfathers and godmothers in baptism are not to be looked on in the mere light of guardians, who may make an agreement for a minor, which agreement (when that minor comes of age) he may refuse to comply with. This allowance, however necessary in civil affairs, is not to be made in the things of God. God has declared in his word, that, without these things we are now considering, no man can have admittance into the kingdom of God : so that every person is bound (if he is desirous of salvation) to get within the covenant of grace ; consequently the engagement we actually entered into by those persons is still in force, and is actually binding, as these sureties promised that they would make us acquainted with the privileges every converted christian is entitled to (which privileges were explained in the last sermon) so, besides this, they undertook (as far as their care could go) that we should be brought home to God, and accept of this redemption. This is the subject of the answer to the next question to be discoursed on. After a recital of what God has promised to bestow on all his faithful servants, *viz.* that he would



make them *members of Christ, the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven*; the party to be examined is then asked, *What did your godfathers and godmothers then* (i. e. at the time of your baptism) *what did your godfathers and godmothers then for you?* The answer is this, *They did promise and vow three things in my name; first, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the christian faith; and, thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.* So that we see there are three things to be wrought in us, repentance, faith, and obedience: and, first, repentance: this is contained in the former part of the answer, where we promise to *renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.* We are all born in sin, and have a strong propensity to the commission of it; we are all, by nature, the children of wrath, and are under the dominion of Satan, and nothing less than the almighty spirit of God can rescue us from his dominion. And when we are made partakers of the promises of God, we must renounce all allegiance to the enemy of our souls; we must leave off from sin, upon God's *leaving off from wrath, and letting go displeasure.* The devil, prompted by pride and envy, is our open and avowed enemy; he makes use of every art,  
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of open attacks and secret insinuations, to keep us off our guard, to lull our consciences asleep, and to make us unconcerned and regardless of our salvation. He seduced our first parents, and spares no pains to draw us all aside from God: he neither slumbers nor sleeps, but improves every opportunity to *destroy our bodies and souls in hell*. This enemy, then, it must be our highest interest industriously to avoid.

By renouncing the devil and all his works is meant, a rejecting his authority, and withdrawing our allegiance from him. We are not only to bid adieu to Satan, but to all his works; to all sin, of which he is the cause, and to which he is the constant tempter and seducer. *We cannot serve Christ and Belial; we cannot serve two masters; for either we shall hate the one and love the other, or else we shall hold to the one and despise the other*; and, therefore, he that is enlisted under Christ's banner must renounce all allegiance to his enemy; for, whoever calls himself a christian, is guilty of treason and rebellion against his Lord and Saviour, whenever he obeys the commands of Satan. If this be the case, good God, what a number of traitors and rebels does this land abound with! For these reasons are we required to renounce the devil and all his works; they are all odious in the sight of God, and quite contrary to his will; and, whoever is brought home to God will renounce the devil and all his works, he will from

henceforth disown his authority, and studiously avoid committing those sins which he is the contriver of and seducer to, and which are therefore very properly stiled *his* works.

But who can thus renounce the devil and all his works? No one, in his own strength, can do this. We must be led in that, as in all other parts of our duty, by the good spirit of God; 'tis he that must *convince us of sin*, and lead us to a true and hearty sorrow for it: 'tis *God that worketh in us both to will and to do*; we have a strong and potent enemy to encounter with, and 'tis only thro' him that is *stronger than he*, that we shall be able to overcome him.

As we are to *renounce the devil and all his works*, we are also to *renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*. This is a bait with which the devil allures and seduces many; but he who is desirous of saving his soul must discard all those dazzling objects, and fix his eye on a more glorious crown; he must despise the grandeur of this world, and have his treasure in heaven; he must set light by the enjoyments of this lower world, and count them all but so much *dung and dross, that he may win Christ*. *The world must be crucified unto him, and he unto the world*. He is never to embrace any worldly advantage when it stands in competition with his duty, but to spurn it from him. He is to prefer the favour of God, and a sense of his love, to all earthly enjoyments whatever; they  
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are called the pomps and vanities of this *wicked* world; *wicked*, not as it is the work of God, created and preserved by him, but wicked in too many of its inhabitants. By *world* is here meant the people or children of this world, those whose hearts are fastened down to mere earthly objects, and who seldom, if ever, cast a look towards God. All those who live in enmity with God, who would divert us from minding our christian race, are to be renounced by us, and so are the pomps and vanity they offer to allure us with. And pomps and vanity they may well be called; for, what but mere empty shew and paltry pleasures can the world afford? View the whole round of this world's delights, whether honour, wealth, grandeur, fame, or any other good it boasts of, and what service will they be of to a dying sinner? They cannot keep his *body* from the grave, much less can they save his *soul* from hell. These things must be renounced, if we are desirous of living the divine life, and of having an interest in a happy eternity. But this we are unable to do of ourselves; we must implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit; he must teach us the insufficiency of every thing below, and fix our hearts and desires on heaven and heavenly things.

We are also to renounce all *the sinful lusts of the flesh*. We have all a near enemy in our own nature; we carry a fire in our bosom, which will certainly destroy us, unless extinguished by the grace

grace of God; our own sinful and corrupt nature furnisheth us with too many opportunities of hastening our own destruction. By the *flesh* is here meant, all sinful concupiscence, and evil acts. The *flesh* means the mere natural man, one who is unconverted, in whose soul no divine life is begun, but, *whatever* evil he *findeth in his hand to do, he doth it with all his might*; who is borne down by the strength of his passions, and is ready to *commit all iniquity with greediness*. Till this nature is cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and sanctified by his spirit, nothing but iniquity can proceed from it: for which reason the desires of the flesh are here called *sinful lusts*, full of sin and wickedness: so that all sinful inclinations and passions are to be mortified and subdued; we must renounce all obedience to the flesh, if we are desirous of being *led by the spirit*; we are to bring into subjection all sensual desires, and be *created a-new after the image of God*. But this new creation is the alone work of the Holy Spirit; he only can *purge out the old leaven, and make us a new lump*. Thus are we to renounce those enemies of our souls, the devil, the world, and the flesh; for, *if any man be in Christ, he is become a new creature: old things are done away, behold all things are become new. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts*.

This, I before observed, is the work of God's holy spirit. These are the marks and fruits of repent-

repentance; these are the first steps the converted christian takes in his future progress. When a sinner is wrought on by the holy spirit of God, and convinced of his vileness and deformity, when he is convinced of the evil of sin, and the danger of his present situation, he cannot but hate and abhor the cause of all his misery, and be filled with detestation of it. If he is truly sorrowful for his past offences, he will shew that sorrow (through divine grace) by utterly forsaking them. 'Tis not enough for a man to own himself a sinner, and yet continue in sin; that is a mere mockery of God: He must find himself really distressed and grieved for his iniquities; he must be sensibly touched with remorse and shame; he must feel the weight of sin to be intolerable, and be heartily desirous of having it removed. Wherever the work of conversion is wrought in the soul, this is the consequence; a real and unfeigned sorrow for sin, with a desire of deliverance from it, are the signs of a true and genuine repentance. A person thus awakened sees the danger he is in by nature, and knows no peace till God is reconciled to him. 'Tis not enough for him to believe that Jesus Christ died for mankind, unless he has experienced him as a Redeemer to his *own soul*; and those who are so awakened, are thus wounded in order to be healed. All who are brought to a sense of their sins, and to a desire of deliverance from them, who renounce all dependance or hopes  
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of satisfaction from their former works, the works of the devil, the world, and the flesh, all who are thus called *shall be also justified*; this enables them to see their sins pardoned through Jesus Christ. They find no help in themselves, they therefore look up to him on *whom their help is laid*; they look up to a Redeemer, and in him they behold and receive their cure. And this is christian faith. By means of this faith alone they are justified, which is the second thing requisite to salvation.

But, before I proceed to the consideration of the christian faith, I shall, agreeably to the method I proposed, address myself to you by a short application of what has been said already; and this we are led to by the next question, which asketh the catechumen, "Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and do as they have promised for thee?" And the answer is as follows: "Yes, verily, and, by God's help, so I will: and I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end," What solemn words are these! Yes, verily, and by God's help, so I will! How few of those that speak these words are ever bid so much as to intend such a thing! Yet here we not only declare that we are determined so to do, but also profess to thank God for giving us an invitation by Christ Jesus, and implore

plore his grace to enable us to perform it. What can be abominable hypocrisy, if this is not? To repeat a set of words, *solemn* as these are, without the least meaning or attention to them? For, if we repeat them not now, we profess to believe and abide by them, and those whose children thus repeat them, act the hypocrisy over again, by letting them take the name of God in their mouths, and run over a form of words with as little (perhaps not a quarter so much) attention to them as they themselves will recommend to them in learning a ballad. Is this the tender behaviour of christian parents! What must a savage do to be distinguished from such christians?

But, to the application. Have we renounced the devil and all his works? If so, we have been deeply humbled under a sense of our former sins and transgressions, we have been convinced that he is our greatest enemy, and are heartily desirous of being freed from his dominion. But how few of us have ever felt the weight of sin? How few of us find it a burden too grievous to be borne? On the contrary, are we not slaves of Satan? Do we resist (or are we desirous of resisting) his temptations? So far from renouncing, do we any works but his? There is one way, indeed, of renouncing the devil, which many polite people have given into, and it is renouncing him with a witness, for they would fain renounce him quite away. The first and chief article in the man of fashion's  
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creed

creed is, to believe that there is no devil, no eternal torments; but we who believe (or, at least, profess to believe) the scriptures, must renounce him in a different manner. We may be convinced of his existence from the sin and misery there is in the world, and, if we are desirous of eternal happiness, we must renounce those works of his which would deprive us of it.

Again. Have we renounced *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*? How few of you take pleasure in any thing else? Are we not more solicitous about adorning our bodies, than saving our souls? Are we not contented, while our souls are hanging over the pit of hell, provided our bodies are but decorated with finery and fooleries? Which of us take half so much pains to adorn our souls with the graces of Christ's gospel, as we do in setting out the body, which must soon moulder and decay.

Again, Have we renounced all *the sinful lusts of the flesh*? On the contrary, do we not indulge ourselves in the gratification of every sinful inclination? Do we mortify our desires, or deny ourselves the enjoyment of any sensual pleasure? Do we not *walk in the flesh*? Are we not (too many of us) *dead in trespasses and sins*? Are we not *the servants of corruption*, and to every good work a *reprobate*? Ask your own hearts the question, and do not flatter yourselves in an affair of so great importance.

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Be not displeased then, my brethren, at being told of the sinfulness and infirmity of your nature, when your own consciences must accuse you, and witness to the truth of it; but be prevailed on to confess your sins, and glorify God by a sincere repentance. Let me address you in the words of the text, and say, *Repent ye, repent ye*, from the center and bottom of your souls; *Repent ye*, and *turn from your sins and transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin*. Beg of God to convince you of sin, to shew you the need you have of a Redeemer, and to lead you to him; beseech him to give you a stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour, which is the next thing required, viz. to *believe all the articles of the christian faith*.

And this is included in the second part of the text, and *believe the gospel*. This we are led to by our catechism, where the party being required to rehearse the articles of his belief, answers, *I believe in God the Father Almighty*, and so on to the end of the Apostle's creed.

In this symbol we profess to believe in God, who made the world by his power: that the second person in that glorious essence, for our salvation, came down from heaven: that he was conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin, by the operation of the Holy Spirit: that he suffered for us under *Pontius Pilate*, the *Roman* governor: that he was crucified also for us, did actually die, and was buried: that he went down into hell, or

Hades,

Hades, or place of the dead: that, on the third day from his crucifixion, he rose to life again, went up to heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of God, to intercede for sinners; and that he will come again at the end of the world to judge the living and the dead, according to their works. We profess likewise to believe in God the Holy Ghost, the third person in the ever blessed trinity; in the holy catholic, or universal church of Christ on earth: that Christ has a visible church on earth, which he hath promised to preserve to the world's end: in the communion of saints, that the saints on earth have spiritual communion with each other by their Saviour's merits, and their prayers for each other, as also with the saints in heaven: in the forgiveness of sins by Christ Jesus: that the body shall rise again at the great day of judgment, and be reunited to the soul: and that there will be an everlasting life after death. To all which we say *Amen*; which, in this place, means yea, verily, and is an affirmation or assent to the truth of what we have been repeating.

But this is not all that is meant by the christian faith. *Faith* is one thing, *belief* is another. Many believe every article of the apostles creed, and yet are very far from the kingdom of God. It is not a notion in the head that will gain salvation, for *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. These things, considered as general truths, will be of no signification, unless we bring them home  
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to ourselves; and this we are directed to do by our catechism, in her next question and answer. The question is, "What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief?" The answer is, "First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world; secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind; thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God." This is the christian faith, and this I shall also apply to ourselves as we go along.

We are taught by this faith, not only to believe in God as the creator and governor of the universe, but also in his particular providence. Whoever is converted and brought home to God by sincere repentance, (as above described) is made a partaker of the christian faith: this faith is the gift of God, and by the medium of faith he is justified, by this faith, as the means. Our justification is entirely owing to the free grace of God in Christ Jesus; but faith is the means or instrument by which this justification is applied to us, and by which we apprehend it; and this faith enables us to see God, not only as our Lord and Creator, but also as our Father and our Friend; as a tender compassionate parent, providing for our wants, and chastising us for our disobedience, according to the wise dispensations of his providence. By this faith the christian is enabled to see God as reconciled to him through the blood of his Son;



for God, out of Christ, *is a consuming fire*. But by this grace the christian sees his wrath averted from him, and perceives him as standing in the nearest relation to him : he casts all his care and confidence upon this merciful God, who he knows is able and willing to provide for his spiritual and bodily wants.

And now, my brethren, have we received this faith? Is the God who made us, and all the world, our father? Do we trust in him, hope in him, fear him, love him, obey him, serve him, depend on him, as if he were indeed our father? Is he indeed our reconciled father? Is he no longer a consuming fire, but is he made one with us again by Christ Jesus? Have we received the earnest of the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*? If so, happy are we; if not, let us not rest till we obtain this glorious privilege. And consider, my brethren, what a dreadful thing it is to be at enmity with the eternal God of heaven and earth; and, unless he is our father, he is indeed a jealous God, ready to execute vengeance upon us. O! let us cry mightily unto him, that we may receive the adoption of sons.

The next particular the christian faith leads us to is, to *believe in God the Son, who redeemed us and all mankind*. This is the peculiar happiness of the converted christian; he is not only made to believe in general that Christ died for sinners, but is enabled to see his own sins pardoned and forgiven.

given. It is in God the Son who redeemed *me*. This is, indeed, a great and precious privilege; would to God we were sensible of the worth of it! The converted christian, by the help of divine faith, which God gives him, is enabled to see his sins pardoned, to see the Lord Jesus to be his Redeemer and mighty deliverer. None but those who have experienced this knowledge can describe that inward peace and satisfaction, that joy and comfort, which arises in the soul from a sense of sin pardoned. How is that soul supported under all difficulties and trials, which has experienced the Lord Jesus as its gracious physician? Whoever of us has experienced this inestimable blessing, is sensibly convinced that God is reconciled to him, that his sins are pardoned, and Christ Jesus is a Redeemer to his soul? Those who have, need not be told to give God the glory: those who have not, (and, I fear, they are the greater number) let me advise to seek it earnestly. Be but sincere, wait but at wisdom's gate, and God will not fail to speak peace unto your souls.

O! that he would bring home to himself all here present, and say unto every soul among us, as he did to the man sick of the palsy, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

Thirdly, The other blessing attending this divine grace of faith is, that it teaches the christian

to *believe in God the Holy Ghost*, who sanctifieth him and all the elect people of God. As he is enabled to see God the Father as his guardian, and friend, and kind benefactor; as he is enabled to see God the Son as his blessed Saviour and Redeemer, to rescue him from endless misery, so is he bid to look up to God the Holy Ghost, as bearing a part, and acting a kind office in his redemption. He finds his soul renewed and sanctified by his efficacious influences, and enjoys sweet and comfortable communion with his God: by this communion of the Holy Ghost his whole nature is changed; he is enabled to bring forth the fruits of the spirit in a life of righteousness and true holiness. Thus his faith is not a mere belief, but an inward working principle leading him to holiness of heart and life; and to this he is directed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who sanctifieth him, and all the elect people of God, all those who are thus united to Christ.

And now to apply this. Let us examine ourselves whether we have received this spirit. If we have, let us convince the world of it by our lives and conversations; if we have not, let us beg of God to give it to us: for we may be assured, that the outward air is not more necessary for our bodies, than the operations of the Holy Spirit are for our souls. 'Tis he alone can convince us of sin, he alone it is who can open the  
eyes



eyes of our mind, and bring us acquainted with the things of God.

Let us then, my brethren, if we are desirous of eternal salvation, implore his gracious influences; let us intreat the Almighty God to give us the grace of his Holy Spirit, that we may walk worthy of our vocation, and be rendered *meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light*; and I know of no words more proper than those of our own church.

“ Almighty and everlasting God, heavenly  
“ Father, we give thee humble thanks that thou  
“ hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of  
“ thy grace and faith in thee; increase this know-  
“ ledge and confirm this faith in us evermore.  
“ Give thy Holy Spirit to every one here pre-  
“ sent, that we may be born again, and made  
“ heirs of everlasting salvation, through our  
“ Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth,  
“ with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for  
“ ever. *Amen.*”

## S E R M O N III.

St. James's Epistle General, Chap. ii. Verse 24.

*Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified,  
and not by faith only.*

**A**S we have already considered the nature of the christian covenant, and of the christian faith, as also what is required of us to believe, we are, in the next place, to attend to what is required of us to do.

We are taught, by our christian catechism, the nature of the christian obedience. The first point is repentance, or conversion to God. This was contained in the first promise made for us in our baptism, *viz. that we should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh*: The second is faith, implied in these words, *that we should believe all the articles of the christian faith*.

Next in order to these is the christian obedience. We are to shew our faith by its fruits, which will be displayed in real holiness of heart and life; for our godfathers and godmothers promised for us, *thirdly, that we should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life,*

*life.* To all which we acknowledge ourselves to be most strictly bounden.

Now if we have received the christian faith, we cannot be destitute of the christian obedience. Faith and belief are two very different principles. A man may believe all the articles of the creed, may be very orthodox in his opinion, and yet be an entire stranger to christian faith. True, genuine faith is the gift of God, which never fails to lead the possessor of it into all acts of piety and holiness. Every one who is possessed of this faith, is led to it by repentance; he is convinced of his own vileness, and is brought home to God by real and unfeigned sorrow for his past offences. When he receives this faith, he is enabled to see his sins pardoned through the blood of his Redeemer, and is convinced of his safety to all eternity. This faith he knows he hath received by the inward satisfaction he feels in his own breast, and he evidences it to the world by a godly, righteous, and sober life. If he should be suffered to fall into any sin, he is raised again by sincere repentance; and he has the comfortable persuasion, that *God will not cast him off for ever*; and, *tho' he falleth, yet shall he find a stay*. The sense of God's love in pardoning his offences will always be a vital principle of holiness within him, and the grace of God, which he has received, will always teach him *to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and*



*to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world: he will convince himself and the world of the sincerity of his profession, of the genuineness of his faith, by outward acts of piety to God, and righteousness to men.*

And here is the place for works to be introduced. They are the fruits of faith, and it is an operative working faith that we are justified by. This is insisted on every where in scripture, and more particularly in that part of it from whence I have selected the words of the text.

St. *James*, in this chapter, addresseth himself to hypocritical professors of christianity, who abused the doctrine of God's free grace in Christ Jesus as laid down by St. *Paul*, and imagined they had a liberty of gratifying all their lusts and appetites, and that they might continue in sin, provided they did but believe; substituting *belief* in the room of *faith*. The apostle reproves them for this error, and convinces them of their impious absurdity by a very familiar argument: *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful for the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.* Faith unattended with its proper evidences can be of no avail. The Apostle goes

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on : *Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works ; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* A man may say to any one that contends for an *Antinomian* faith, how wilt thou convince me of thy faith ? If it produces no good in thy life, I cannot believe thou hast a saving faith ; whereas, when I tell thee I have faith, I appeal to my works for the truth of my assertion : you may be convinced of my faith by my works, as a tree is known by its fruits. The Apostle proceeds : *Thou believest that there is one God ; thou doest well ; the devils also believe and tremble : but wilt thou know, vain man, that faith without works is dead ? Was not Abraham our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar ? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect ? And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness : and he was called the friend of God. Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

As this part of holy writ has been greatly controverted, it may not be amiss to set it in its proper light, which I shall endeavour to do in the following discourse : my subject naturally leads me to it, which is, the christian obedience, as contained in the ten commandments, and explained in our truly christian catechism. I shall, therefore, first endeavour to shew the meaning of the words in the

text ; and, secondly, shall apply them to ourselves, by considering the above-mentioned portion of our church-catechism.

And may the holy and Almighty Spirit incline us to receive, with meekness, the true word of life ; and grant that we may not be forgetful hearers, but doers of the word.

First, then, I shall endeavour to shew the meaning of the words in the text, *Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*

Many and various have been the disputes among christians concerning the doctrine of justification. Some men, imagining there is a manifest contradiction between this and St. *Paul's* account of justification, have gone the shortest way to work, and have rejected the whole epistle of St. *James* as spurious and uncanonical ; (many *Antinomians* have attempted this ;) others again (the papists especially) have taken occasion to insinuate, that man has it in his own power, by his own strength, independent of divine grace, to perform works acceptable to God ; from hence hath arisen the doctrine of works of supererogation, so greatly insisted on by the church of *Rome* to this day. We shall find the truth lies between these two extremes.

That we may be the better able to ascertain the meaning of the words, it may not be improper to attend to what St. *Paul* hath delivered concerning  
this



this same point; since, by comparing scripture with scripture, we shall the more easily determine the matter. St. Paul says, in the epistle to the Romans, *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith: therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law. If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.* The meaning of the fore-cited verse is this: If *Abraham* had been justified by any works of his own, he might indeed have some reason to glory, that is, before men, but not before God, because nothing that he could do, could stand the test of God's justice; at least, he would have done no more than his duty, supposing his works ever so perfect. He goes on, *For what faith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward reckoned, not of grace (not of favour) but of debt.* A man might challenge the reward as due to his own merit. *But to him who worketh not, who lays no stress on his own performances, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness; even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered, and so on.* This (by the by) may inform us whether *David* believed in *Christ* or no; since  
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an inspired apostle tells us, he is describing the advantages of a christian faith.

Now here, if we attend, we shall find what works they were that *St. Paul* declares have no share in justifying; and if we attend to it, it will help us greatly in our present enquiry. The works here spoken of were the works of the law; this is plain from what follows: he declares, that the works of the law were so far from having any share in *Abraham's* justification, that the law was not then given, for *Moses* was not then born. *We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness; how was it then reckoned, when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; for if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect, because the law worketh wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression; therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.*

We see here faith in Christ is called *the faith of Abraham*. Why will our modern Heathens deny that *Abraham*, and all the faithful, had the same faith with sincere christians? A little farther it is added, *Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed*

*imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. And again—Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access, by faith, into that grace where in we stand, and rejoice, in hope of the glory of God.* What St. Paul (and, indeed, the whole Bible) labours to prove is, that we were all lost in *Adam*, and that we can only be restored by the blood of Jesus Christ. It is by the free gift of God in Jesus Christ that sinners are pardoned, and accepted in God's sight; for, *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous*: so that, in fact, neither faith nor works are the procuring cause of our justification, that is the alone work of Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Faith is the means or instrument by which the promise is applied to the soul, and works are the evidences and distinguishing marks of a true and lively faith. Where St. Paul says, that *Abraham*, and all true believers, are justified by faith without works, he must be understood to mean, that they were justified by faith alone, without the works of the law. For, the persons he was addressing were such as were desirous of returning back to the *Mosaic* law; which, if they did, St. Paul assures them, that Christ could be of no service to them, because, by that, they would renounce their dependence on him, and trust to their own righteousness. But then,



then, when he says, they are justified by faith with out works, he does not mean that they were justified by a bare belief, a dead, inactive faith, a lifeless principle, a mere notion in the head, but by such a *faith* as was *the gift of God*; the inwrought work of his spirit leading and inclining them to real holiness of heart and life. He gave them no encouragement to build the least hopes upon, that they should be accepted without a lively and working faith. *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? And again,—but now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and, the end, everlasting life. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye, through the spirit, (mind that by the by) but if ye, through the spirit, (not through your own strength) but if ye, through the spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* It is plain, from hence, that St. Paul meant, not an Antinomian faith, a bare belief, but such a *faith as worketh by love*. The same Apostle, in his epistle to the Galatians, expresseth himself in the following manner: *The scripture has concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe: but, before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith:*

*faith: but, after that faith is come, ye are no longer under a schoolmaster, for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* We see here St. Paul declares and affirms, that we are justified, or made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, by faith without works, without the works of the law.

I have already observed, by faith is meant a certain principle implanted in the soul, which will not fail to produce piety, and holiness of heart and life. We see that the law could justify no man, could make nothing perfect. *Abraham* was justified by faith in Christ Jesus. Although it is denied that *Abraham* believed the gospel, yet we are told, in the third chapter to the *Galatians*, that the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the gospel, unto *Abraham*, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed; so that they which be of faith are blessed with faithful *Abraham*. By faith in Christ was *Abraham* justified, and not by the works of the law; for, as we read in the seventeenth verse, the law was introduced four hundred and thirty years after *Abraham's* trial. And God gave *Abraham* the inheritance by promise: and it was by faith in that promise (let our modern infidels say what they please) it was by faith in that promise that faithful *Abraham*, and all the holy men after him, were justified before God. I have God's word for my authority,

rity, and therefore shall never scruple to make the assertion.

Having thus seen *St. Paul's* account of justification, let us try if we can reconcile it with what is delivered in the text. But, first of all, let us observe, that the same doctrine is enforced in the epistle to the *Hebrews*. In the eleventh chapter 'tis declared, that *Abraham*, and all the old worthies, were accepted by their faith, and that they all obtained a good report through faith: whereas *St. James* manifestly declares, that they were justified by works. *St. Paul* says, *we are justified by faith without works*: *St. James* affirms, that *by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*. This looks like a glaring contradiction; and, if we understand all the terms alike, a contradiction it certainly is.

Let us examine whether both the Apostles mean the same thing by the same expression. But that cannot be, because they so manifestly contradict each other; and as they were both influenced by the same infallible Spirit, they must be right. *St. Paul* must affix some other meaning to the word *works* than *St. James* did, or else the justification they speak of must be different; perhaps both these cases, as I shall state them, will prove just.

And, first, we may be certain, that the word *works* (as differently used by the Apostles) has a different meaning. *St. Paul*, we have observed, addressed



addressed himself to judaizing christians, to such as were desirous of being circumcised, and of observing the law of *Moses*; therefore the works he speaks of were the works of the law; so that, when he says we are justified by faith only, he means, not a dead inactive faith, but such a *faith as is the gift of God*; which the christian is led to by sincere repentance, and is a principle of holiness within him: and in this sense *Abraham* was justified by faith; by such a faith wrought in his mind, as made him obedient to the will of God, and manifested itself in that remarkable degree it afterwards did.

Now St. *James* was writing (as the pious Mr. *Burkit* observes) to hypocritical professors, to such persons as asserted, that they were saved by believing in general that Christ died, although they continued yet in their sins. For that reason he informs them, that a faith, unattended with good fruits, will be of no avail; the true christian faith is always evidenced by good works: and in that he is confirmed by the whole tenor of scripture.

When we preach up justification by faith, we mean, not a dead, lifeless faith, (the faith of devils) but such a faith as is the gift of God, witnessed to souls by his spirit, and leading them into holiness of heart and life. Those who have it are changed from nature to grace, from death to life, and are the servants of the most high God: And in this sense *Abraham* might well be said to be justi-

fied by works, that is, by such a faith as was productive of good works. But (by the by) *Abraham* would have been justified by his faith if he had done no works, if he had not prepared to offer up his son; for God, who knew his faith, could not but know his sincerity and good intention, and would (no doubt) have justified him if he had had no opportunity of reducing his faith to practice: so that by this we may see that a man may have faith without works, but he cannot have works without faith. This was the case with the thief on the cross, and I will produce my authority for it presently. St. *James* here joins them together, and looks not on them as two different principles; so that when St. *Paul* says, *Abraham* was justified by faith without works, he means, that he was justified by faith in Christ without the works of the law; and, when St. *James* says he was justified by works, he means, such works as were the fruits of a true and lively faith in Jesus Christ.

But then we are to observe, that a man must have faith before he can have works, as well as a ship must have water before it can swim; for, though *Abraham* was justified by works, and all faithful people may be said to be justified by works, yet they are not justified in the same sense; for, as the Apostles mean not the same thing by works, so neither do they mean the same thing by justification. The justifications here spoken of are

very different: St. *Paul* speaks of the justification before God, St. *James* of the justification before men. God must certainly know the inmost secrets of the soul; he can tell whether the christian's faith be sincere, though he may have no opportunity of evidencing it to the world, owing to his incapacity or death; but man cannot tell whether my faith be sincere but by my outward conduct. If I am converted to God, and united to him by faith, I am immediately accepted in his sight, my sins are pardoned, and my person is justified: but, whatever privileges I enjoy by this, whatever comfort I may experience in my own mind, yet I can never convince the world of the sincerity of my profession but by the fruits of my faith. And it is thus St. *James* put the case: *Yea, a man (not God) yea, a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* If a person (after he is converted, and has received this faith) live long enough to reduce his faith to practice, it is his duty, and he dare not do otherwise: but then he will never be proud of his works, as knowing they are none of his works: his salvation is wholly owing to the boundless love of the Lord Jesus Christ. The faith that applies this to his soul is the *gift of God*, and the works that flow from it are the works of divine grace upon his heart; it is the Holy Spirit of God that leads him into the right way.



This is not only the doctrine of the New, but also of the Old Testament: none of the Old Testament Saints laid any stress on their own performances, but constantly called upon God for fresh supplies of grace. *David says, Open thou mine eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy law; incline my heart to thy testimonies, &c.*

Before God, then, we are justified by faith; but, before men, we are justified by works. Blasphemous indeed is the assertion, that works commend us before God. We are poor, vile earth, and miserable sinners, and can do no acceptable service to God. Our own hearts will tell us so, if we ask them the question. We are justified only by faith in Christ Jesus. This Faith, however, is a vital principle of holiness within us, and they who really have it are never destitute of good fruits. Works are very far from being unnecessary, because, without them, our faith can never be tried: but we must be careful to distinguish what our works are; nothing performed in our own strength, no systems of morality, however finely digested, will abide the examination of our heavenly Father. The works of a christian must proceed from faith, and faith is the foundation of all christian graces, as *St. Austin* observes in a discourse on this very passage, "Good works follow the justified person, but do not attend the unjustified one."

Works

Works are so far from having any hand in our justification before God, that we can do no good works till we are justified. To the truth of this the homily of our church upon good works annexed to faith, may bear witness: "Faith giveth  
" life to the soul, and they be as much dead to  
" God that lack faith, as they be to the world  
" whose bodies lack souls. Without faith, all  
" that is done of us is but dead before God, al-  
" though the work seem never so gay and glorious  
" before man. Where the faith of Christ is not  
" the foundation, there is no good work, what  
" building soever we make. There is one work  
" in the which be all good works, that is, faith,  
" which worketh by charity: If thou have it,  
" thou hast the ground of all good works. All  
" the life of them that lack the true faith of  
" Christ is sin." And again we are told, in the  
same homily, "Faith may not be named without  
" good works, for then it is no true faith; and,  
" though it is adjoined to works, yet it is above  
" the works; for as men, that be very men in-  
" deed, first have life, and after be nourished,  
" so must our faith in Christ go before, and after  
" be nourished with good works; and life may be  
" without nourishment, but nourishment cannot  
" be without life. A man must needs be nou-  
" rished by good works, but first he must have  
" faith. He that doth good deeds, yet without  
" faith, he hath no life. I can shew a man that

“ by faith, without works, lived and came to  
 “ heaven, but without faith never man had life.  
 “ The thief that was hanged when Christ suffered  
 “ did believe only, and the most merciful God  
 “ justified him. And because no man shall say  
 “ again, that he lacked time to do good works,  
 “ for else he would have done them, truth it is,  
 “ and I will not contend therein; but this I will  
 “ surely affirm, that faith only saved him. If he  
 “ had lived, and not regarded faith, and the works  
 “ thereof, he should have lost his salvation again.  
 “ But that is the effect that I say, that faith by  
 “ itself saved him; but works by themselves ne-  
 “ ver saved any man, Here you have heard the  
 “ mind of *St. Chrysostom*, whereby you may per-  
 “ ceive, that neither faith is without works, hav-  
 “ ing opportunity thereto, nor works can avail  
 “ to everlasting life without faith.”

Here are the concurrent testimonies of one of  
 the first fathers of the christian church, and of  
 our own pious reformers; and this may serve as  
 an answer to those who ask us why we dwell always  
 upon *Jesus Christ*, and do not sometimes preach  
*good works*, viz. Because we think it not quite so  
 proper to put the cart before the horse, which all  
 those do who preach up works to their hearers,  
 before those hearers have attained to true christian  
 faith. They may work for ever, and be farther  
 from heaven than when they first set out. Who-  
 ever goes about to work out his salvation before  
 he



he is brought home to God by faith in Christ Jesus, is striving against the stream, and does *despite to the spirit of grace*. O! my brethren, cry mightily to God for this saving faith.

Again. We think it not quite so proper to bid a man walk without legs, which all those do who preach up works without faith in Christ. We think it not quite so proper to bid a man build a house without materials, or without laying the foundation, which all those do who preach up works without beginning with faith in Christ. We think it not quite so proper to imitate the *Egyptian task-masters*, and command the people to *make brick without straw*, which all those do who preach up works without faith in Christ. And, lastly, we think it not quite so proper to be guilty of perjury, which all those are who preach up works, without laying the foundation in Jesus Christ.

These are my reasons, and I could give you as many more, if you had time to hear them: for I can safely appeal to the sacred scriptures, to all the primitive fathers, to all the foreign protestant churches, to our own pious reformers, to our own church in her articles, homilies and liturgy, as also to the writings of her ablest divines in her better days.

This, viz. *Justification by Christ alone, without merits or deservings*, this is the doctrine which the papists always oppose, and in defence of which *Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Taylor*, and a

whole army of martyrs, nobly bled; this is the doctrine our forefathers hazarded their lives in defence of, that they might transmit it to us in its primitive purity. How would the venerable bishop *Hall*, or the learned *Andrews*, (who lies entombed in this place) how would either of them stand amazed to hear those doctrines they so bravely defended, exploded and ridiculed as wild enthusiasm? But God is faithful, who has promised to his church, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Our fore-fathers enjoyed this doctrine, and were conspicuous for their piety; but we, their wiser children, have a better taste; the stale doctrines of christianity are a worn-out subject; so now we are harangued in the softest manner, and advised “to pluck the fragrant fruit of virtue from the fair tree of nature, and to avoid the prickly brambles of immorality and vice;” and the polite people are all charmed, pay their devoirs to each other, and go home quite delighted with the sleek divine. *How is the fine gold changed, the silver become dross, and our wine mixed with water.*

I should now apply what has been said, as I promised, but I must defer it to another discourse; in which discourse I give you my promise, that, for once, I shall preach up works very strongly. In the mean time I shall leave you the words of that learned and venerable prelate archbishop *Usher*. I chuse to deal in old divinity, for there is very  
little

little of the modern worth attending to. *No man having drank old wine, straitway desireth new, for he saith the old is better.* His words are these:

“Faith (in the point of justification) is an instrument whereby my justification is wrought,  
 “an instrument whereby Christ is received; and  
 “the weakest hand may receive a piece of gold  
 “as well as the strongest. We must know, that,  
 “in the point of receiving, we all live on God’s  
 “alms; all our justification is his free gift, and  
 “faith is that palsy hand which receives all our  
 “comfort. It is not then *a* faith that justifieth,  
 “but faith. It is called by *Peter, a like precious*  
 “*faith. Simon Peter, a servant and an Apostle of*  
 “*Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like pre-*  
 “*cious faith with us, through the righteousness of*  
 “*God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* It is *ὁμοίωμα*,  
 “equally valuable in the meanest christian, that  
 “hath a trembling hand, to pitch on that, and  
 “draw virtue from him; it is a like precious faith  
 “in them, as in the most great Apostle *Peter*, and  
 “all the rest.” Which faith may the God and  
 father of all mercy vouchsafe to dispense to all here  
 present, for the sake of Jesus Christ our redeemer;  
 to both whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost,  
 three in one, and one in three, be ascribed all the  
 glory of man’s redemption now, henceforth, even  
 for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON



## S E R M O N IV.

JOHN, Chap. xiv. Verse 15.

*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

OUR blessed redeemer in this chapter comforts his faithful servants under their affliction at his approaching death; he acquaints them with the necessity there was for him to suffer death, *that the world through him might be saved*; he informs them that he was going *to prepare a place for them*, and that he would accompany them with the gracious influences of his Holy Spirit, *even to the end of the world*; that he would water his church with the dew of his grace and blessing, and lead it thro' the wilderness of this world to mansions of bliss and glory in the kingdom of heaven; he encourages them to persist in their fidelity to him, and promises to be *a God nigh unto them in all that they should call upon him for*. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* As this must have been matter of great consolation to his sorrowful disciples, so the engaging and pathetic manner in which he bids them farewell, must knit

knit their affections more closely to him, and draw them with the cords of love. He therefore bespeaks their love, and commands them to express that love by an obedience to his injunctions; for, wherever the principle of love is implanted, it will not fail to shew itself on all occasions; there will be an eager desire of pleasing the beloved object, and no opportunity to effect it will be let slip.

For this reason our Redeemer commands his disciples, and in them he commanded us, to yield a ready and willing obedience to his will; *If ye love me, saith he, keep my commandments.* These words are so plain that they need no particular explanation; I shall therefore consider them as containing a general precept, and shall accordingly apply them to my present purpose, which is, to treat of the nature of christian obedience, as contained in the ten commandments of God.

The intervention of the late festivals prevented my doing this before, and I intend it for the subject of the following discourse.

In my last discourse I observed, that works are the fruit or sign of a saving faith, and that, wherever that faith is, works will always attend as a natural consequence, as much as light and heat flow from the sun.

And here is the place for works to be introduced; they are not the cause of our justification, because a man must be justified, before he can perform

perform good works ; but they are the inseparable attendants on true justifying faith.

I endeavoured, at the same time, to reconcile the seeming difference between St. *Paul* and St. *James*, with regard to the means of justification, by shewing, that the works each speaks of are very different ; St. *Paul* meant the works of the law, St. *James* speaks of such works as proceed from a true and lively faith. I likewise observed, that the two Apostles mean different things by the term justification : St. *Paul* speaks of justification before God, and St. *James* of justification before man. I gave sufficient reasons in defence of this assertion, and proposed to apply the doctrine to ourselves, viz. that it is incumbent on us to shew the soundness of our faith in the exemplariness of our lives : without this, our faith is only a bare belief, and our profession no better than an outside shew, and mere formal hypocrisy,

To proceed. After having opened and explained the doctrine of repentance and faith, our church, in her excellent catechism, proceeds to teach us the christian obedience. Three things we may recollect are required of us, repentance, faith, and a holy life ; the two former have been fully considered, the last is now under consideration.

After a short exposition of the Apostle's creed, the catechist addresses the party in the following words : *You said that your godfathers and godmothers*  
did



*did promise for you that you should keep God's commandments; tell me how many there be?* The answer is, *ten.* And the party is again asked, *which be they?* To which it is answered, *the same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* The first commandment is, *Tbou shalt have none other Gods but me;* and so on to the end of the ten commandments. I propose to give a short paraphrase upon each command as I go along, and then to apply the whole, the substance of both tables, to ourselves. And may the good Spirit of God be present with us at this time, that those who are united to Christ may be enabled to shew the fruits of their faith, and that the unconverted may have the precepts of the law set home upon their consciences, and be awakened, and converted, and live.

These commandments I shall press home upon two sorts of people; first, upon those who have already attained to the true faith of Christ, in order to convince them of the necessity there is of a more than ordinary circumspection on their part, that the enemy may have no reason to blaspheme. I do it in order to guard you against the Antinomian doctrine, that a bare belief is sufficient to salvation. This doctrine is indeed dangerous, it tends to licentiousness, and is entirely repugnant to scripture, as well as to our own church, in the

latter part of the seventh article: "Altho' the  
"law given from God by *Moses* as touching cere-  
"monies and rites, do not bind christian men,  
"nor the civil precepts thereof ought of necessity  
"to be received in any commonwealth; yet, not-  
"withstanding, no christian man whatsoever is  
"free from the obedience of the commandments  
"which are called moral." And, again, her  
twelfth article saith thus: "Albeit that good  
"works, which are the fruits of faith, and fol-  
"low after justification, cannot put away our  
"sins, and endure the severity of God's judg-  
"ment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to  
"God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of  
"a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them  
"a lively faith may be as evidently known as a  
"tree discerned by the fruit." Altho' these testi-  
monies prove that works have no hand in our jus-  
tification, yet works always follow it, and are the  
christian's evidences that he is in a state of salva-  
tion.

The other persons, before whom I would lay  
the law as clearly as possible, are sinners and un-  
believers, those who are without God in their  
hearts, and are unconcerned about their spiritual  
state, that they may see the danger they are in  
from their breach of it, and be prevailed on to  
come to Christ in unfeigned sorrow, and with tears  
of sincere repentance.

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The first commandment is, *Thou shalt have none other gods but me.* Now, as the negative includes also its positive, we may observe, that we are not only prohibited certain crimes, but are commanded to practise the opposite graces; so that in all these negative precepts, positive institutions are also implied. In this precept, then, we are commanded to have our whole thoughts and desires fixed and centered upon God alone, to make him the supreme object of our affections, to depend entirely on him, for protection here, and for salvation hereafter, to make his will the rule of all our actions, and to take care that every action of our lives, every circumstance and part of our conduct, may tend to promote his honour and glory; to believe in him as our God and Father, as reconciled to us in Christ, as our friend and benefactor, as our merciful creator, redeemer and sanctifier; we are to contemplate his essence, to admire his glory and perfections, and study to imitate him in all the various attributes he exhibits and displays.

Sins against this commandment are atheism and infidelity, unworthy thoughts of God, irreverent expressions, and ungodly actions. We break this commandment whenever we place that affection on created objects which is due to God alone, when we do not love him with every faculty of our soul, when we fear man more than God, when we neglect our duty to him for fear of giving



giving offence to the world, to avoid the imputation of singularity, or any other epithet the men of this world shall (in their great wisdom) be pleased to distinguish us by. We transgress this precept whenever we divide our hearts between God and mammon, when we presume on his mercy or despair of his favour, when we murmur or repine at the afflictions he sends us, and refuse to submit to all his dispensations, when we are more solicitous about *the meat that perisheth*, than about that *which endureth for ever*, when we turn a deaf ear to his invitations to repentance, when we despise his threatnings and disregard his promises; in short, we are guilty of the breach of this command, whenever our whole heart and soul are not right with God.

The second commandment is, *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image*, and so on. In this precept we are enjoined to worship the Lord our God *in spirit and in truth*, to pray unto him, to praise his name, to hear his word, and to attend on his ordinances with reverence and decency, agreeably to his will, in such manner as he hath willed and commanded us to do.

Sins against this commandment are idolatry and superstition. As the first commandment forbids us to acknowledge any other God than Jehovah alone, so this forbids us to worship that God in a wrong manner. We are forbidden to make any representation of him, or to liken him to any created

created being; we are to make no similitude or representation of him according to our gross conceptions, but to conceive him as a pure and holy being, merely spiritual, *without body, parts, or passions*, and as such to adore him from the very bottom of our souls *in spirit and in truth*. We are to worship none but God, much less are we to make any images or representations of created beings to worship them.

The charge of idolatry, and consequently, a breach of this command, is justly thrown upon the papists. It is well known that they pray, and avow the practice of praying, to saints and angels, and by that means deprive God of his glory, by paying divine honour to his creatures; for, if prayer and adoration be not divine honours, I confess myself at a loss to know what are. As to their using of images by way of mediums or helps it is absolutely unscriptural, and a superstitious and idolatrous custom: they themselves (their teachers I mean) are so sensible that their practice in this particular is forbidden by this command, that in most of their books of instructions they omit the second commandment, and divide one of the others into two, to keep up the appearance of ten commandments. I am aware that here in *England*, in the books they publish and disperse among our common people, they pretend to disallow of this practice, and insert all

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the commandments as they stand in the bible; but it is for a very good reason, because, were they to omit the second commandment in this country, where the bible is, or may be, in all hands, the imposture would be so conspicuous and glaring, that it must necessarily be detected; but abroad, in those countries where the scriptures are locked up from the generality of the people, it is their common practice.

To proceed. We are forbidden in this precept to entertain any irreverent thoughts or conceptions of God, not to liken him in our mind to any created object; we are not to think of him improperly, but to worship and serve him in the way he has prescribed, and in no other. This command is enforced upon us with the strongest sanction, viz. from the consideration of the awful attributes of God: *For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children.* If we view God as a God of strict justice, how dreadful and tremendous must he appear. To the wicked and unconverted he is indeed a jealous and a dreadful God. In the law he is a *consuming fire*. When the law was given from mount Sinai, it was delivered in majestic terror, it was attended with *thunderings and lightnings, with blackness of darkness and tempests*: the scene was so dreadful that Moses said, *I exceedingly quake and tremble; and if so much as a beast touched the mountain, it was to be stoned,*



*stoned, or thrust through with a dart.* And in the same manner, whenever a sinner looks upon God as delivering the law, and exacting a strict obedience to it, he must behold him arrayed with terror. But if we leave mount *Sinai*, and turn our eyes to mount *Calvary*, there we shall behold him as a God of love and mercy, as saving us from the curse of the law, and accepting a ransom in our stead by the blood of the lamb.

The third commandment is this; *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.* In this precept we are commanded to honour God's holy name and his word, to speak of him with reverence and fear, to pray unto him in all humility, to praise him with decency and devotion.

Sins against this commandment are blasphemy, perjury, profane cursing and swearing, indecent expressions, irreverent speeches. We violate this precept whenever we make mention of his name with polluted lips, when we do not speak with becoming fear and veneration, every time we mention his name in our conversation, unless that mention be made of him with a serious intent, and with a desire of promoting his glory; whenever we take his name in our mouths upon any sudden surprize, or upon any trifling occasion, or, indeed, upon any emergent occasion, except his honour requires

requires it of us ; every time we do this we rebel, and are *an abomination to the Lord*.

Again. We transgress this command whenever we worship God improperly, even in our religious exercises, in our devotional duties ; we take the name of God in vain, whenever that name is upon our tongues and not in our hearts ; in our public worship we profane his name, when we profess to call upon the Lord to have mercy upon us, to give his spirit to renew and sanctify us, when at the same time we do not so much as care whether he hears us or not, when we are looking about us, and intent upon other objects, at the very time, when, with our tongues, we implore his pardon and forgiveness for his dear Son Jesus Christ's sake ; whenever we do this, we are guilty of profaning *that great and fearful name, the Lord our God*.

These are some few of the breaches of this command. It is impossible to bring the several instances of disobedience to these commandments, with their several aggravations, within the compass of a discourse, I can only hint a few of them ; but these few will be sufficient, I hope, to convince us that we have all transgressed the law, and are incapable of performing it. However, if any are determined to try the experiment, to keep the whole law in their own strength, and to merit heaven by their works, they ought not to be  
offended

offended if I inform them what these works are, which a perfect God requires.

The fourth commandment is, *Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day*, and so on. In this precept we are enjoined to set apart one day, at least, for the honour of God and the concerns of our souls, to lay aside all worldly considerations, and devote the whole season to God's service. The reason why, in the christian dispensation, the day is altered from the seventh to the first, is so well known, that, I presume, I need not repeat it, especially as I gave you a discourse upon this commandment last year. We are hereby enjoined to cease from worldly labour, to give rest to all about us, that they may have an opportunity of attending on the things of God *without distraction*; we are to employ ourselves in his service in public and in private, in his church and in our families, and, in short, to pay the greatest regard to it, as being emphatically stiled, *the Lord's day*.

Sins against this commandment are, a neglect of the sabbath, an attention to our worldly calling, omitting the duties of the day, absenting ourselves from God's worship, spending it in idle recreations and amusements, in impertinent visits, and in whatever manner we are employed, unless it be in his service, or in the service of our brethren, such as the care of children, visiting the sick, relieving the distressed, and comforting the afflicted. We transgress this precept whenever



we behave irreverently in God's worship: for we may profane the sabbath even in our public duties of religion, by not attending on them with that seriousness and attention, that devotion and fervour, their importance demands. In this, and many other ways, we may, and we do, profane the sabbath, and, consequently, break this commandment.

Thus much for the four first commandments, which are called the commandments of the first table, and more immediately concern our duty to God; the other six are called the commandments of the second table, and relate to our duty to our neighbour.

The fifth is, *Honour thy father, and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* In this commandment we are enjoined submission to all in authority; we are to pay a proper deference to all our superiors, to be obedient to *the higher powers*, and that *for the Lord's sake*; we are enjoined duty and respect to parents, to magistrates, to lawful governors, and an exact compliance with all their reasonable commands. This principle of obedience we must invariably observe, and that, *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*, not to rebel nor resist the higher powers, even when they oppress us; we are still to obey them, *suffering wrongfully*. The only weapons of a christian against his lawful governors are prayers and intreaties. This doctrine

of obedience (however it may interfere with human pride) is strongly inculcated throughout the scriptures : christianity recommends and enforces a principle of obedience.

Sins against this commandment are, disobedience to parents, unfaithfulness to masters, disaffection to magistrates, disloyalty to princes, and (with great deference to the men of wit and dignity be it spoken) a contempt of God's ministers. Whenever we break the commands of our superiors, we break the commands of God ; they are his ministers, and, however light we may make of a breach of God's law, we are told, that *they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*. I mean not this of resisting princes only, but of all acts of disobedience to superiors, whether parents, masters, magistrates, or others.

The sixth commandment is, *Thou shalt do no murder*. In this we are required to preserve the lives, to protect the persons, and to defend the cause of our fellow-creatures.

Sins against this commandment are, the wilful taking away the life of any one, directly or indirectly, the plotting or contriving it, the secretly wishing or desiring the death of any person ; all those steps which tend to shorten our brother's life, such as persuasions to intemperance, or any rash enterprize, all oppression and barbarity, and, in short, whatever else is contrary to the christian temper of love and meekness, of patience and

long-suffering: Again; the crime of self-murder, all means which tend to destroy our constitution and shorten our own lives, are forbidden by this commandment.

The seventh is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* In this we are enjoined the strictest chastity and modest deportment, to have our thoughts as well as words and actions, undefiled, and free from impurity.

Sins against this commandment are, all acts of obscenity and uncleanness, all impure desires and wanton inclinations, all that abominable, odious, mean, fullsome, filthy, beastly conversation which too great a part of the world indulge themselves in, to the corruption of their own hearts, and to the no small confusion of every modest person that hears them.

The eighth commandment is, *Thou shalt not steal.* In this precept we are commanded to give every one their due, *to owe no man any thing, to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us.*

Sins against this commandment are, thefts, frauds of all kinds, as well secret as open and violent, all rapine and injustice. We sin against this commandment when we deprive any man of his property, when we withhold from him his due, when we refuse paying our lawful debts when we are able so to do, when we contract debts which we are sensible we have it not in our power to discharge; all unlawful bargains, all cheating and  
over-



over-reaching, all advantages taken of the ignorance of another, all unfair dealings in buying or selling, all oppressions of the poor, all manner of injustice, are so many breaches of this commandment.

The ninth commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.* In this we are commanded to speak the truth from our hearts, to give our public testimony of our neighbour (whenever we are called on) in truth and sincerity, *without guile, without partiality, without hypocrisy*; to defend our neighbour's character, and to draw a veil of love over his faults and imperfections.

Sins against this commandment are, swearing falsely against our neighbour, spreading false, scandalous, and malicious reports, undermining him; all attempts to lessen his reputation, all misconstructions, bitter invectives, and invidious reflections. We transgress this precept whenever we publish our neighbour's *real* faults, unless the glory of God, or his reformation, be our chief, our sole motive. All slander and evil-speaking are here forbidden.

We are now arrived at the tenth commandment, which is this: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.* We are commanded in this precept to be satisfied with the station God has

has allotted us, to do our duty in that sphere of life he has placed us in, and to *be content with such things as we have*; to promote our neighbour's advantage, and rejoice at his success and prosperity.

Sins against this commandment are, murmuring and dissatisfaction, discontent, repining at our condition, envy of others, coveting our neighbour's goods and property, uneasiness at his success, wishing his ruin or disappointment; all unlawful attempts or desires to dispossess him of what he at present enjoys.

Thus have I laid before you the ten commandments of God, and have endeavoured to shew what is enjoined or forbidden by them; I could not, indeed, produce all the several aggravations of the sins against them, because the time would not permit. These commandments respect our whole duty both to God and man. This is the law by which we are to examine ourselves, and by which we shall be judged.

The substance of what I have advanced upon these commandments is contained in the recapitulation of the laws of each table in our catechism. After the commandments are repeated, the question is asked, *What dost thou chiefly learn by these commandments?* To which the catechumen replies, *I learn two things, my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour.* This is followed by another question: *What is thy duty towards God?*

The

The answer is, *My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.*

This is a brief recapitulation of the four first commandments. *This is the first and great commandment, and the second is like unto it; namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets, love of God, and, for his sake, love of man.*

The other six commandments are briefly summed up in the answer to the next question, which is this: *What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?*

The answer is, *My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me; to love, honour, and succour my father and mother, to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters, to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters, to hurt no body by word nor deed, to be true and just in all my dealings, to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart, to keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering, to keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity, not to covet nor desire other men's goods, but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living,*  
and



*and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.*

Thus have I gone through with the christian obedience, and laid before you the law of God.

And now, my brethren, let us apply this law to ourselves. This is what we should examine ourselves by. But where is the man who will dare say he has kept these *commandments blameless*? Who has preserved the law of God *entire, lacking nothing*? What man is he who has paid a perfect obedience to this law? No man, verily, except *the man Christ Jesus*. He, indeed, has performed every tittle of it. He obeyed the law in the stead of sinners, they are to be accepted for what he has done, and his righteousness will be imputed to them.

In applying this law of God to our own particular, I would address myself to three different sorts of people: first, to those who have been brought home to God by sincere repentance, and are united to him by faith.

You, my brethren, have experimentally known the terrors of the law, and have been compelled to acknowledge you have grossly violated it; but, now ye have received *the spirit of adoption*, you must still go on, *conquering and to conquer* all your spiritual enemies. As your faith is an inward vital principle, you must be careful to express it by a willing obedience to these commandments: Not that ye can do this of yourselves, ye know that

that *in yourselves dwelleth no good thing*, but ye know whom to have recourse to; the throne of grace is erected for that purpose, and assistance is provided for all who ask it in humble faith. You have the promise of the Holy Spirit to lead and direct you: implore his guidance, that ye may shew the soundness of your faith by the strictness of your lives. Of you properly is the christian obedience required.

Those who are unconverted cannot pretend to do it; they would begin at the wrong end were they to attempt it. No obedience can proceed from a sinner before he is justified: works follow faith, and do not go before it. You who have received this faith, that *gift of God*, that earnest of your inheritance, must beg the assistance of the Holy Spirit to enable you to persevere. Shew your love to your Redeemer by keeping his commandments, and adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things.

The next sort of persons I would address myself to are sinners and unbelievers, all impious and profane persons. You, my unhappy, because my unconverted brethren, have now heard the law of God laid open. Here is a perfect and tremendous God requiring a perfect obedience. Your consciences must inform you that you have notoriously violated his commandments; you are become enemies to God, and are really in danger of eternal destruction; and, if you die in your  
uncon-

unconverted state, it is impossible for you to escape the damnation of hell; for *the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.* O! may this melt you down, may it awaken you from the lethargy of unconcern you are in, from the spiritual sleep with which the enemy of souls has blinded your eyes; may you be convinced of sin, and cry out in agony of soul, with the trembling jailor, *what must we do to be saved!* If you are once awakened you will find help at hand; for altho' you have broken the law, Christ hath kept it; and only by his obedience shall you be accepted. I speak not this to encourage a sinful course, God forbid! what I have said already will, I hope, acquit me of that charge: for, when a sinner is converted, he dares not sin. I speak this to comfort repenting sinners, when they *walk heavily, and weeping as they go*; such as these have a merciful Redeemer, the Lord Jesus to assist and support them.

The last persons I would now speak to are the self-righteous, those who are determined to obtain heaven by their own works and deservings. You have heard, my brethren, what the law requires, and you may be assured a perfect obedience is exacted. And will any here say they have kept the whole law? For my part, I stand self-accused and self-condemned: there is not a single commandment but what I have broken. I own myself to be a great and grievous offender, a  
poor



poor, lost, undone creature : I have nothing to trust to but the abundant mercies of God : I desire to be saved as a sinner : I trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation, and that is my reason for preaching him to you : and I hope none here present will attempt to say they can save themselves by virtue of their own obedience. I have a better opinion of you than to think you would give your hearts the lie in such a manner. Be convinced then, and acknowledge, that all the world are become guilty before God, and that you really stand in need of a Redeemer. But, perhaps, you'll say, " You do the best you can, " and Christ will do the rest." So Christ is to be an half-Saviour. You will be as little beholden to him as possible. Indeed, my brethren, you are mistaken ; Christ Jesus will be a *whole Redeemer, or none.* Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law which saith, *cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them ?* We are expressly told, that *whosoever keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.* And to give you a convincing proof of man's merits before he has charity, and the love of God shed abroad in his heart, we are told, that a man may bestow all his goods to feed the poor, yea, may give his body to be burned, and yet may it profit him nothing ; and ye are under the curse, unless you have obeyed all the law, from a principle

ple of love to the *Lord your God*. This, surely, must convince you. Blush, for shame, at talking of your works, as if they were to justify you; humble yourselves before God, and acknowledge yourselves to be sinners; embrace the Lord Jesus for your entire Saviour and Redeemer, because, if you are ever so desirous of keeping the law, and intend ever so well, and work ever so hard, you cannot perform it, for *in many things we offend all*. We are not able, of ourselves, *so much as to think a good thought*. One work, indeed, is highly requisite, and that is, the work of justification and redemption wrought in our hearts. Nothing but the spirit of God can assist us in this work, and this we are taught by our church in her liturgy; for, after every commandment in the communion service, we acknowledge ourselves sinners before God, and implore his grace; we beg of him to *have mercy upon us, and to incline our hearts to keep his law*; we implore forgiveness for breaking the commandment in the first part of the petition, and pray for his preventing and restraining grace in the other.

Of ourselves, then, we cannot keep God's commandments; and this we are told in our catechism, where the catechist addresses the pupil thus: *My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his*

*his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.*

We must be converted, and then we must pray to God for the inspiration of his Holy Spirit to lead us on our way. The catechist then proceeds: *Let me hear, therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's prayer?* The party answers, *Our Father*, and so on, to the end of the Lord's prayer. But this, God willing, shall be the subject of my next discourse.



## S E R M O N V.

Second Book of *Chronicles*, Chap. vii. Verse 14.

*If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.*

**H**AVING considered and explained the fresh offer of salvation God has been pleased to make to his fallen creatures, we are now arrived to that part of our catechism which points out and directs us to the means of grace, to those ordinances which were instituted by Christ himself, and in the use of which we are to wait for his manifestation of peace to our souls.

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These ordinances are prayer and sacraments; these are the means of God's appointment, for which reason we may always expect a blessing will attend them. The first of these will be the subject of my following discourse.

Our church, in this truly christian system, acquaints us with the necessity of being converted, informs us that we must be united to Christ by faith, and then delivers the law, to the terror of the unconverted, and for the furtherance of the christian in the divine life. When a sinner is justified, he is then enabled to obey God's commandments; but not of himself, not in his own strength; the holy spirit of God sanctifies his nature, and *inclines his heart to keep these laws.*

That we can by no means keep these commandments in our own strength, our church assures us in her exhortation prefixed to the Lord's prayer, wherein she says, *we are not able to do these things of ourselves, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace, which we must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer.*

Prayer is the mean we are to make use of; we have no hand in our justification, the whole is owing to the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, his spirit applies it to the sinner's soul; every step in the christian's course, from his conversion to his glorification, is the alone work of his merciful redeeming God: he is to wait upon God in *humbleness*

*ness of mind, and ask the bread of life of that father who is too merciful to returning sinners to give them a stone.* We must remember then, and be convinced, that of ourselves we can do nothing; without the grace of God's spirit we are helpless and wretched, and this grace we are to ask of him, if we desire to find rest unto our souls; and, if we ask it, we shall be sure to meet with it.

That I may be the better able to enforce this duty of prayer upon you, I have made choice of the words of the text for my present subject, as they not only point out the necessity, but the efficacy and usefulness of prayer to God, as they contain a promise that he will always *be nigh at hand to those who call upon him: If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.*

This gracious promise was made to *Solomon*, in answer to his supplication at the dedication of the temple of the Lord; the Lord *Jehovah* answered his petition, and professed himself well pleased with the dedication. Thus, when we commit our souls unto him, desiring to be dedicated to his service, he will hear our prayers, and grant our requests. We may be convinced of the great and singular benefits arising from thus conversing with God, from the comfortable manner in which our merciful God revealed himself to *Solomon* in

consequence of his address: *And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.* We are taught that the temple here spoken of was a type of Christ, and therefore all the blessings promised to this temple were figurative and descriptive of those spiritual blessings to be conferred on all those who belong to Christ, the true temple.

From these words I propose (with the divine assistance) to discourse, in the first place, on prayer in general; secondly, I shall give you a short paraphrase on the Lord's prayer, and shall conclude with an application of the whole to ourselves.

And may the holy and eternal Spirit dispense his gracious influence to all here present; may he bind up all our wounds, and speak peace unto our souls, giving us the spirit of prayer, and leading us to the throne of Jesus!

First, then, I am to say something of prayer in general. Prayer is the mean or instrument by which we are to obtain all blessings from God; all good things proceed from God, he is the author  
of



of all good, both to the souls and bodies of men; every thing we stand in need of, whether we regard this life or a better, *cometh down from the Father of lights*. That we are in a state of dependence on God I have before had occasion to observe, and, I presume, it needs no proof; our weakness and inability may convince us how necessary it is we should be sustained by a higher hand; our inability to work out our own salvation makes it necessary for us to apply to one who is able to save us, and the innumerable accidents we are liable to with regard to our worldly affairs, make it our interest to have recourse to him who can *give us all things richly to enjoy*.

Now the mean by which we are to make this application is prayer. Prayer is an act of the mind, whereby the creature converses with its creator; I say prayer is an act of the mind, because, unless we pray from our hearts, we cannot be said to pray at all. Words are only signs, and are no further effectual than as they speak the language of our hearts; and as that is no prayer which consists only in a form of words unactuated, undictated, (if I may so say) by the heart of the speaker, so that may truly and properly be called a prayer which, though it does not always shew itself in articulate sounds, yet proceeds from the heart, from the very inmost soul of him who makes it: of this kind was the prayer of *Hannah*; altho' her voice was not heard, yet her prayer went

up to the almighty God, and brought down the wish'd-for blessing. God sees the desires and affections of the heart. One desire, one earnest sincere desire of the heart, is more acceptable to him than a thousand words; one secret breathing of an humble soul is of more weight with the great and eternal God, than the finest composition, than the most pompous elocution, than the most florid expressions of our lips; and, indeed, it is natural to suppose this. We should pay very little regard to the request of our fellow-creatures, supposing them not earnest in their entreaties, supposing them to ask without meaning, inattentive to the matter of their petition, and quite regardless of the event. A king would hardly extend his mercy to that criminal who should be indifferent and unconcerned at the very time he professed to sue for pardon in the humblest and most submissive manner; neither can we expect the immortal *King of kings* will pay the least regard to those who *draw nigh unto him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him.*

Prayer is an act of the soul, by which the christian draws nigh unto God, by which the soul makes all its wants known unto him, and implores aid and assistance from his gracious hand. It is branched out into various kinds, as, petition, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving; but it is not my present design, nor have I time to enlarge on the several kinds of prayer; it would be

be of little use to give a definition of these particulars, could I do it in the most masterly manner; this would be only speaking to your heads, whereas I am desirous of speaking to all your hearts; and may the eternal God enable me so to do!

Having defined prayer in general to be an act of the soul, whereby the christian draws nigh to God, and begs a supply of all his wants, I shall make it my business, under this head, to set before you what qualifications are requisite to pray aright, and the great advantages arising from this communion with our God.

And, first, when we draw nigh to God, we must do it with a just sense of our own unworthiness. I suppose myself at present speaking to sinners, who are desirous of obtaining pardon of their sins, and of being united to Jesus Christ. Prayer to God, indeed, is necessary for a supply of our bodily wants; but as pardon of sins is of infinitely greater consequence, and as we are commanded to *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, I shall, accordingly, dwell upon this point.

Those then who would pray to God for eternal life, must come to him, and fall prostrate before his footstool, with a deep sense of their own unworthiness, sufficiently convinced that they stand in need of his mercy, sensible that they are lost and undone without his pardoning grace and re-



deeming love; we must see and know our own vileness and depravity before we shall desire to be renewed and sanctified; and if we consider that by nature we are enemies to God, and that *every thought and imagination of our hearts is only evil continually*, that we must continue in this deplorable state till the Spirit of God is pleased to convert and breathe into us the breath of divine life, if we examine our hearts, and recollect our many actual transgressions, our frequent provocations of God, and withal reflect on the eternal weight of misery which is the unavoidable consequence of sin unrepented of, if we consider that it is not in our power to repent, without the grace of God preventing and assisting us; that if we die in an unconverted state, eternal destruction must inevitably be our portion, we cannot but desire a riddance from our fears, and deliverance from our dangers; and, indeed, till the Spirit of God is pleased to set the law home upon our consciences, and discover to our minds the terrors of the law, we shall not be earnest about the grand concern; till we see the real depravity of our nature, and the danger of our continuing in that depravity, we shall be very cold and indifferent about the things of God; but, no sooner are we convinced that there is such a thing as eternal damnation, and that eternal damnation is the portion of every unconverted soul, than we are roused from our spiritual lethargy, and groan ear-  
nestly

*nessly to be united to God. The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.* Suppose a man was to apply unto a physician for relief, and yet, upon being asked the nature of his disorder, should tell the physician that nothing ailed him, and that he wanted none of his advice, and could do very well without his assistance, would not this behaviour appear extremely ridiculous? Would it not be very absurd? Would not the physician conclude, that either the person was out of his senses, or else that he intended to mock him? And what less mockery are they guilty of who *draw nigh to God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him?* How much less are those persons infatuated who profess to ask for mercy at God's hand, who seem to pray for an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, nay, (to go farther still) who acknowledge in the liturgy that *they have no health in them*, who stile themselves *miserable sinners*, who say they *do not presume* to approach the Lord, *trusting in their own strength or righteousness, but in his manifold and great mercies?* What, I say, must we think of those who profess all this, and yet have the vanity and assurance to deny the charge when brought against them by another, and claim happiness as a reward due to their own merits, who value themselves upon the performance of some outward duties, (as if a perfect God could be pleased with their imperfect services) who do not desire to be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ,

Christ, because they think they are clean enough already, what are we to think of them? Why, that they are (whatever specious pretences they may make) that they are in the very *gall of bitterness*, and in the very *bond of iniquity*. These men think, if they perform some outward duties, all will be well; nay, many look upon coming to church, and especially to the sacrament, as comprehending the whole of religion, not considering how necessary it is that their corrupt natures be renewed by the Spirit of God before they can *think a good thought*.

To convince these men of the absurdity of their profession, I shall shew how differently bishop *Beveridge* thought of the matter; he owns his best actions are tainted with sin.

“ I do not only (says he) betray the inbred  
 “ venom of my heart, by poisoning my common  
 “ actions, but even my most religious perform-  
 “ ances with sin. I cannot pray but I sin, I can-  
 “ not hear or preach a sermon but I sin, I cannot  
 “ give alms or receive the sacrament but I sin;  
 “ nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but  
 “ my very confessions are still aggravations of  
 “ them; my repentance needs to be repented of,  
 “ my tears want washing, and the very washing  
 “ of my tears needs still to be washed over again  
 “ with the blood of my Redeemer. Thus, not  
 “ only the worst of my sins, but even the best of  
 “ my duties, speak me a child of *Adam*; inso-  
 “ much



“ much that whensoever I reflect upon my past  
“ actions, methinks I cannot but look upon my  
“ whole life, from the time of my conception to  
“ this very moment, to be but as one continued  
“ act of sin.”

Does not this sound like enthusiasm? This was the temper with which this venerable prelate approached the throne of grace. Do you not imagine he prayed and wrestled with God for a blessing? How could he do otherwise, when he so clearly saw the need of it? Oh! there is nothing has such success in driving us to God as a sense of our lost condition. When God is pleased to awaken a soul, and set its sins, with their several aggravations, before its face, how earnestly will that soul strive with God in prayer! when a sinner is convinced of his danger, when he sees no good in himself, when he sees no help, no place for refuge, how does he then fly to God! how does he *groan earnestly for deliverance, waiting for the adoption of God! renounce all vain confidence, all proud boasting* in himself, and desire to rely on the all-sufficient merit of Jesus Christ his Redeemer!

This, my brethren, is one temper of mind wherewith sinners are to approach their God. As for the insolent, arrogant, self-conceited, self-sufficient, and self-righteous moralist, who wants no pardon, he is to do as he pleases: may the Spirit of God touch the hearts of all such, and make  
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*the defence wherein they trust, to be as a tottering wall, and as a broken hedge; but the humbled and convicted sinner, who knows everlasting destruction is his portion unless his soul is washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, will not fail to cry mightily to God in prayer, begging his forgiveness, imploring his pity and compassion; he will wait for his redeemer as he passeth by, and happy will he think himself if he may but touch the hem of his garment, knowing, if he is admitted to this privilege, he shall be made perfectly whole.*

You then who are under convictions, *who walk heavily as you go, you who really mourn and are afflicted*, who see your own nothingness, whom nothing less can satisfy than an interest in your dear Redeemer, behold a way to find relief; have recourse to prayer, call incessantly upon God, *do not let him go except he bless you.* Are you sinners? do you feel you are sinners? Enough, my life for yours the Lord Jesus will hear your prayers; throw yourselves upon Christ; there is plenty of oil, bring your *empty pitchers that they may be filled*; come boldly to the throne of grace, that throne is erected for sinners; you and I, my fellow-sinners, have a right to go there. O God make us thankful for this unspeakable gift! the Lord Jesus died for us, my brethren. O! for a thousand tongues to celebrate the praises of this merciful Redeemer! come boldly then, do not despair: is not Christ almighty! surely then he is able to  
pardon

pardon the greatest sinner; his sacrifice is sufficient, and, if you are but sensible you want a Redeemer, have recourse to *him*. It is such as you the Lord has sent me to speak to this day; my master commissions me to proclaim *peace to them that are far off*. Come then, just as you are; do not think yourselves improper objects of God's mercy; do not think your sins of too deep a dye for his blood to wash away, for, *though they be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow, and they will love much to whom much is forgiven*. Come then, just as you are, and say, *Lord if I perish, I will perish at thy feet*. O that God may shew you all your own hearts, that you may be able to know what a hell lies there! If once you are convinced you are sinners, you cannot but have recourse to prayer; and, till then, you will have no relish for prayer at all. Christ wants none of your righteous, formal people, your grave moralists and outside professors, none of your scribes and pharisees, none of your hard workers, that value themselves upon their own obedience (as they have the arrogance to term it.) The story of the pharisee and the publican may convince you of this. The former brings a large catalogue of good works, a long list of virtues, and yet was rejected; while the poor, broken hearted publican, merely for owning himself a sinner, for confessing he wanted mercy, *went home justified, rather than the other*.

Now



Now if this will not convince our modern self-righteous men, nothing will; for I challenge you all, the very best of you, (be you who you will) I defy the best of you to say you ever performed half the duties that this same Pharisee did; you never were half so punctual and exact in outward duties as he was, and yet you find he was rejected; and shall you then be accepted for a little flimsy, motley patch-work of your own righteousness? Now, methinks, I see the old man rising in some of your hearts: "What mean you by this? What, shall not *we* be accepted before the publicans and sinners!" Have I then given offence? I am glad of it, it is a good sign, I hope the word will have power; however, I repeat it again, and, work as hard as ye can, and as long as ye will, ye must at last lay down your arms, and accept salvation as God's free gift, or perish for ever: and my master has commissioned me to say to all formal professors, to all who make a rout about their own righteousness, ye hypocrites, *the publicans and barlots* (except ye repent, yes, repent of all your gaudy works too) *the publicans and barlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before you.* But, some, perhaps, may say, "Well, but though I own Christ's merits to be necessary, yet, surely, some regard is to be paid to *my obedience.*" I am aware that this doctrine is too often inculcated, and it is so smooth and so glib that too many swallow the intoxicating draught. But we read that *Moses*

commanded the Jews not to make their *garments of woollen and linen together*; and, whoever those preachers are who talk of joining man's imperfect service to Christ's perfect righteousness, be they who they will, churchmen or dissenters, they are no better than mere *linsy woolsey* preachers.

But to return. You, my brethren, who are willing and contented to come to Christ as sinners, be of good cheer; if you do not find an answer of peace immediately, pray on: you know *the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*. Trust in God, *continue instant in prayer*, and depend upon it, he will hear you.

And this brings us to another requisite for prayer, *viz.* Faith; we are to ask in faith. Now, you may suppose, I do not mean such a faith as assures the sinner of his reconciliation with God, this is what, I presume, you are seeking after; by faith here I mean belief; you must believe that God is able to heal your wounds, that Christ is a Redeemer able to deliver you, that the blood of the everlasting covenant is sufficient to wash away all your sins, be they ever so great; *if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*. Oh! my brethren, say, with the father of the child, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief*. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, says Christ, believing, ye shall receive. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more*

*more shall my Father which is in heaven give good things unto them that ask him?* Perhaps some troubled soul may say, this is what I want; here is my misfortune, I want that belief; an evil heart of unbelief will not let me see that the Lord is gracious. My brother, I sympathize with you, this has often been my own case; I have known what it is to have my sins and horrid provocations against God staring me in the face, and have been unable to lift up mine eyes to God; I have seen the vileness, the baseness, the treachery, the cursed deceitfulness of my own wicked heart so transcendantly great, that I have thought it impossible for God to pardon such a wretch as me. I can, therefore, I say, bear a part in your anxiety, when you complain of unbelief. If you cannot believe, then, ask God for faith, ask it of God in Christ: perhaps your hearts are so stony that you cannot pray, then you can sigh, you can wish, at least, that God would be merciful to you; and one wish from the heart, one single *Lord Jesus help me*, from a contrite soul, will find its way to the God of your salvation. Beg of God to soften your hearts, to pardon your sins, to assure you of that pardon, to crucify all your evil inclinations, and to lead you by his Spirit into all holiness. I do not want to send people to Christ for salvation, and yet to continue in their sins: those who make the objection plainly prove, that the root of the matter is not in them: there is no sinner that is truly humbled and desir-



ous of pardon, but what hates and abhors himself, none but what is desirous of returning from sin, and leading the life of Christ and of God.

Watch, therefore, unto prayer, my repenting brethren; pray without ceasing, beg the testimony of God's Spirit with your own that your sins are pardoned, beseech him that his *Spirit may witness with your spirits that ye are the children of God.*

The other necessary qualifications to pray aright is a spirit of love to our brethren. You may observe, as I have gone on, that I have not said a word of praying to God for temporal blessings: do not imagine from hence that I would advise you to neglect making application to him for them; the christian will always depend upon God's providence for a supply of his bodily wants; he knows that the God who can give him eternal life, can and will give him earthly blessings. I have not touched upon this, because I am at present treating on prayer in general, and prayer for an interest in Jesus Christ is the principal part of it; besides, the various kinds of prayer will be considered under the head of the Lord's prayer, which I shall hardly be able to accomplish at this time.

To proceed. Love to our brethren is a requisite to prayer; for, when we pray to God for mercy to ourselves, we must also pray for our brethren, yea, for our enemies. Christianity is a communicative religion, and, when we see our own danger, we shall see that of our brethren, and beg

of God to convince them of it ; and this is called intercession, praying for all mankind ; and I do not know of a better expedient to stifle our animosities than praying for each other. It is impossible to conceive the advantage arising from praying for our brethren : when a soul is mounting to the throne of God on the wings of holy desire, and is pleading with him for another as well as itself, when it imitates its blessed master in doing good, how is it warmed and delighted ! Therefore, my brethren, if you have a *quarrel against any*, pray for them. You cannot imagine what a sweet revenge this is. I would advise every narrow-hearted person to use this method of intercession ; indeed it is an admirable one, it enlarges the heart, it opens the very soul, it unites our brethrens crimes with our own, and nails them to the cross of our Redeemer.

I shall now proceed to describe very briefly the uses and advantages of prayer. You will observe, that I have chiefly considered prayer at present as the wrestling of a soul with God for pardon of sin, and an assurance of his forgiveness.

This is the first step, and what the text leads to, which, at the same time that it describes a converted people returning to God, sets forth the advantages of thus returning to him : *If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways,*

*ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.*

First, then, the words suppose the sinner to be convinced of his danger, and likewise to be filled with an abhorrence of sin, to be turned from his wicked ways; for, without sorrow for sin, there can be no pardon, and that can be no sorrow which does not fill us with an abhorrence of it and an aversion to it, which does not indeed necessitate us to beg the spirit of God to enable us to avoid it: but, when the contrite soul comes humbly to God, and throws himself upon his Redeemer, is conscious of his own unworthiness, and trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ, then, saith the Lord, *I will hear from heaven.* Do not despair, my poor, trembling brother sinner, do not despair, *I will hear you from heaven,* says God. God has promised to hear you and be merciful to you, and his promises shall by no means fail. What an honour is this, my brethren, for the great and glorious God of all the universe to lend an attentive ear to such vile worms as we are! Who would not think it an honour to have audience of an earthly king? Behold then, (and admire and love while ye behold) the immortal King of kings vouchsafing to hear the petitions of sinful dust and ashes! but God does not only hear, (for if he was to hear, and then disregard, it would be of no use to us,) but God does not, will not, only hear, but he saith, *I will forgive their sin.* Here is reviving news indeed!



You see, my fellow-sinners, if you pray unto God he will forgive your sins; he has promised, and be assured, if you wait in the appointed means you shall see the promise fulfilled in yourselves, you shall *taste that the Lord is gracious*, and know, by your own happy experience, that the Lord Jesus is a Redeemer to your souls. Oh! what infinite delight does the praying soul experience? Prayer is the life of the soul, and the christian can no more live without prayer, than he can live without food. What encouragement then have we to pray, when God says he will hear us! What encouragement have sinners to pray, when God says, *I will forgive their sins!* Yes, my poor desponding brother or sister, the Lord *will hear your prayer, and forgive your sins*. Be persuaded then, O sinner, to try the experiment; be softened, every hard heart; bend, every stubborn knee, before the Lord Jesus Christ; for *with him there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption, and I will heal their land*, saith God; he will heal our maladies, he will cherish the sinner's heart, he will heal it of all its wounds, and anoint it with the unction of the blessed spirit, and support him under all his troubles.

All the temporal blessings promised to the Jews were expressive of spiritual deliverances to the church of Christ, and, by healing the land of plagues and distempers, is meant, the purging the church in general from heresy, or cleansing the  
sinner's

sinner's heart by the mediator's blood, and leading and conducting him by his good spirit.

I have now endeavoured to set before you the nature, the requisites, and advantages of prayer in general; when I come to treat on the Lord's prayer I shall be more particular: the time will not permit me to enter upon it at present, therefore I shall only make a short application of what has been said, and may the eternal God apply it to all our hearts.

First. You who are humbled under God's hand, who know you are sinners, and stand in need of help, you see, my brethren, a *door open for your deliverance. Turn ye to the Lord Jesus, the strong hold of wounded sinners, ye prisoners of hope. A fountain* is opened, my brethren, in your Redeemer's side, and you need not fear *finding rest unto your souls.* Pray then, my brethren, pray without ceasing, call upon him, for he has promised to hear you.

Again. You who are no more than nominal christians, who are mere formal professors, who will go to heaven by your own works, and will not accept salvation as God's free gift, to you, my brethren, I have spoken very plainly, and I entreat you not to be offended; I desire not to offend your persons, but your unconverted hearts I would offend. Oh! that they may be convinced. Indeed your works cannot justify you. If you be-

lieve the scriptures, if you believe your own church, you can do no good works till you are justified. How ridiculous then is it in you to expect justification from your works, when your works must proceed from justification? Would you not think that man mad who should tell you that the fruit was the cause of the tree? Surely you would say, "I always thought that the tree produced the fruit." Just as mad are you, if you think works are the cause of your justification; they have no hand in it at all, nor can you do one work acceptable to God till you are justified. I know what I say to be true, and, therefore, I use great plainness of speech.

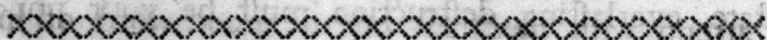
My brethren, bear with me, for, indeed, I am solicitous for your eternal salvation. Do, come humbly to Christ, throw aside your vain hope and false confidence, do not be above accepting eternal life from a crucified Saviour. Indeed, my brethren, *your peace is a false one*; it is your obstinacy and blindness that will not let you see this, and the more you depend upon your own abilities, the more blind you will be. Oh! come then, *as little children*, own yourselves sinners, acknowledge, with me, that you really want a Redeemer; do, come to Christ by prayer, try the experiment, repair to the throne of grace, and beg of God to give you a sight of yourselves, and a sight of your Redeemer.

A word



A word to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and I have done. I presume I need not inform you, my brethren, that, while you continue in your sins, you are in a state of enmity with God. Think, O think, what it is to have the eternal God your enemy, and, if you die in your present state, everlasting destruction must be your portion; when you are on your death-beds, and see the boundless prospect of eternity before you, what horrors will you then be in? And, when your souls depart from your bodies, they will be conveyed by the hands of devils into unutterable woe. O! my God, what horrors will you then experience! what would you then give for a small portion of your mispent time! how gladly would you embrace your Redeemer, and salvation by him! Be persuaded then in time; the Lord Jesus now invites you to be happy; bad as you are, you are not too bad for him to display his loving kindness upon. Come then unto him, and pray to him, and he will have mercy on you. Do not persist in your horrid rebellion against God, do not shut your eyes against the light, do not let your dying Redeemer call in vain. See the blood streaming from his side! see what your redeeming God has suffered for you! do not then, I intreat you, do not crucify him afresh, but come home to him; come down every *Zaccheus*, and O! that the Lord Jesus may incline all your hearts to accept of mercy while it is to be had! Do, my brethren, re-

solve to do what you never did before, resolve to pray to God, try if Jesus be not a merciful mediator: if you come humbly to him, he is able and willing to deliver you, and *whosoever cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out.*



## S E R M O N VI.

Second Book of Chronicles, Chap. vii. Verse 14.

*If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.*

**T**HESSE words contain part of God's promise to *Solomon* at the dedication of the temple.

This prince was assured, by the God of *Israel*, that regard should ever be had to the sacrifices and oblations, to the prayers and supplications which should be offered up therein. God's acceptance of the prayers made there, pointed out, in a striking manner, his acceptance of those prayers which are offered up by faith in Christ Jesus, the true, living temple.

In my former discourse on these words I proposed the following method, *viz.* first, to discourse on prayer in general, secondly, to give you a short paraphrase on the Lord's prayer, and then to conclude

clude with an application of the whole to ourselves: the first of these I have already dispatched; I shall therefore proceed, in the second place, to give you a short paraphrase on the Lord's prayer.

And may the Holy Spirit of God take all our hearts under his gracious influence, that we may attend with meekness on the good word of his grace.

Our church, as I observed, after setting the law before us, informs us, that it is out of our power to obey it. The unconverted cannot perform it; they must, therefore, have recourse to the merits of Jesus Christ, who hath kept it for them: those who are converted cannot observe it of themselves, they must, therefore, implore the guidance of God's good Spirit to direct and assist them. This they must do in the use of the means he hath set up in his church, the first of which is prayer; and, as a pattern for prayer, our church presents us with a most perfect model, composed by our dear Redeemer himself.

After the prayer, she gives us an exposition of it. The catechumen, having repeated the Lord's prayer, is asked, *What desirest thou of God in this prayer?* To which he answers: *I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him as we ought to do. And I pray unto God that he will send us all things that be needful, both for our souls and bodies,*

*and*



*and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers, ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death. And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore I say, Amen. So be it.*

This prayer consists of a preface, six petitions, and a doxology. And, first, for the preface, which is this: *Our Father which art in heaven.*

The person, or rather the Being, addressed in this prayer, is no less than the eternal and everlasting God and Father of men and angels, that God who meted out the heavens with a span, who laid the foundations of the earth; he who founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods; he created all things of nothing, and by him all things subsist. He is therefore properly stiled *Our Father*, because he is our common parent; he formed us of the dust of the earth; to him we owe our being and every faculty of our souls. He is not only our Father by creation, but also by preservation; he not only created but preserves us to this hour. To his wise and good providence are we indebted for every blessing we enjoy; the very air we breathe, every necessary and every convenience of this life proceeds from his bounty and goodness. This Being we address as *our Father which is in heaven*; as for our God, he is in heaven; he hath done what-

forever pleased him. Our God inhabiteth eternity, and dwelleth in that light which no man can approach unto. He ruleth in the heavens over all, from the beginning, Heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool. This awful and tremendous Being are poor, miserable sinners allowed to call upon and approach unto by prayer.

By God, we are not to understand such a Being as some of the heathens invented to themselves, not such a *supreme being*, or infinitely-extended substance as metaphysical deists speak of, but the Lord and God of *christians*, the blessed *THREE-ONE*, One eternal, unchangeable Being existing in three persons, and known to man in three distinct offices or relations. Whenever Christ mentions the Father in the New Testament, we are generally to understand him as speaking of the Essence or Godhead. We are to understand him as speaking in his human nature: thus, when he says, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God*: when he saith, *The Father is greater than I*; he speaks in his human nature. His manhood was taken into the Essence, and that manhood must necessarily be inferior to the Essence itself. *He is equal with the Father*, or Essence, as touching his godhead, although he was inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. When Christ speaks of the Father, he means the Essence or godhead, and when he saith he is inferior to the Father, he speaks of himself as being a man.

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The Father then, whom we are taught to pray to in this excellent form of words, is the holy and undivided Trinity, the undoubted Lord and God of christians, who dwelleth in mansions of glory, infinite in power and happiness, *from everlasting to everlasting*. This consideration should raise and humble our hearts whenever we approach the throne of grace. Our hearts should be raised and elevated when we consider what an honour is conferred on us in being permitted to converse with the great Jehovah; our hearts should be humbled when we consider ourselves as his sinful creatures, unworthy to appear before him.

But this eternal Being is not only our Father by creation and preservation, he is also the christian's father by redemption; and, my brethren, unless the everlasting God is your father in Christ, unless he be a father reconciled unto you *by the blood of his Son*, the former relation will stand you in no stead: his being our Father by creation and sovereignty over us may magnify his power, but his being our Father in the Lord Jesus will magnify his mercy; and, unless his mercy be thus extended to us, *good were it for us that we had never been born*. You, then, who are in an unconverted state, be wise for yourselves; the eternal God, who is able to hurl destructive vengeance upon your heads, now invites you to be reconciled to him: will you but attend to the word of his grace, you may still have a right to call him your Father in Christ.



Christ. And what a comfort must it be to every true believer to know that God is his father, that he is no longer a God of terrors but a God of mercy, reconciled unto him by the Lord Jesus Christ ! what satisfaction must it give to sinners, when they know they have such a *Father who is in heaven*, that the Lord of heaven is their father, and has promised to support them ! how must this encourage them amidst all opposition ! altho' they may be beset with various troubles, altho' on earth they may have *no place to flee unto*, yet in heaven they have a sure friend, to whom they can make their *desires known*, and who *will never leave them nor forsake them*. *Altho' the earth be moved*, and every thing here below be at variance with them, yet have they the comfortable assurance, that *the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier*.

May every soul here present be prevailed on to make this God their friend, to seek an interest in this tender father ; that in all their distresses, *whether of flesh or spirit*, they may know where to go for grace and help. For the christian *knows* that God is his father ; he is also sensible that all good things proceed from him, that as he alone is infinite, so is he abundant in goodness to those who call upon him : And therefore our church, in her exposition subjoined to this prayer, explains the words *Our Father which art in heaven*, by my *Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness*.

There is one thing more to be observed in the preface, and it is this : we are not commanded to say *my* father, but *our* father. Altho' every true believer can say, from his own happy experience, God is *my* father, yet, when we address the throne of grace, it is necessary our hearts should be enlarged ; our hearts must be opened to our brethren, if we expect the ears of the Lord should be open to our prayers : we are to say *our* father, in token that we pray for others as well as ourselves. We call him *our* father, as praying in behalf of all mankind, for all those who are his, who are equally his children by creation, with ourselves, manifesting our desire that he would be pleased to reveal himself to them, and be a father unto them by redemption : we call him *our father*, as praying, in behalf of our brethren in Christ, in behalf of all true believers, to the father of his church, desiring him to water it with the dew of his blessing. How should this enlarge every narrow heart, how should it open every contracted soul, and put an end to those causeless divisions and animosities subsisting amongst christians ! Let us, my brethren, whenever we approach the throne of grace, and profess to call God *our father*, let us implore his Spirit, that we may be endued with a principle of love to our brethren, that we may be desirous of praying for others as well as ourselves. Thus much for the preface, *Our father which art in heaven.*

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The first petition is, *hallowed be thy name.* This is the first thing we are to pray for. By *name* we are to understand not only his name strictly and properly so called, but also his glory and goodness, his power and wisdom, his holiness and might, and all other his infinite perfections. By *hallowed* we mean praised, sanctified, or made holy. The first thing then we are to pray for is, that God's name may be sanctified in us; not only that his name may be praised and had in honour among all kingdoms outwardly upon earth, but that a sense of his glory and goodness may be implanted in our souls; we must desire that *the Lord God* would be *sanctified in our hearts.* Most wisely then did our Redeemer place this petition in the foremost rank, because, till our hearts are whole with God, no prayers we make will be acceptable unto him. It is an easy matter to repeat the Lord's prayer with our lips, but God requireth the heart: God, my brethren, *requireth truth in the inward parts.* *My Son, give me thine heart,* saith God. In this petition, then, we pray (and you'll observe all along, that we are to include our brethren as well as ourselves, for, we do not say, *my father give me,* but *our father give us,* &c.) I say, then, in this petition, the believer prays that the Lord God would be pleased to sanctify himself in his heart; we are to pray that God would be pleased to dwell in our hearts by his Spirit, and *place his name there;* we are to beg for such a measure of  
grace,



grace, that we may have a just sense of God's attributes and perfections, of his infinite glory and redeeming love; that the thoughts and affections of our hearts may entirely center in him, and that it may be our constant employment and our daily study to promote his glory and magnify his love; we are to beseech him that we may be actuated by a constant sense of his greatness and goodness, and have his glory ever in our view.

And now, by brethren, is this the state of our minds whenever we repeat the Lord's prayer? Do we really desire that the Lord God may be sanctified in all our hearts when we say, *hallowed be thy name*? Surely if we did we should see the fruits of it: and yet, unless the Lord is sanctified in our hearts, unless we fear and reverence his holy name from the bottom of our souls, our very prayers are *an abomination* to him. Let us then, beg of God to enable us to *hallow* and sanctify his *name*; let us implore his grace, that our hearts may accompany our tongues whenever we say, *hallowed be thy name*.

The next petition is, *thy kingdom come*. By the kingdom of God is not only meant his dominion and sovereignty over all the earth, (for that kingdom is already established) the kingdom we are commanded to pray for is the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of all faithful people; we are to entreat the Lord to compleat his kingdom upon earth; in an outward manner, that he would be pleased

pleased to bring in all jews, turks, infidels, and hereticks, to the profession of christianity, that Christ may reign and his gospel may be professed over all the earth, that *the earth may be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* We are to beg of him to open the eyes of all unenlightened nations, that they may see and believe the great truths of the gospel, and that *the fulness of the Gentiles may come in*; we are also to pray unto him that the kingdom of his grace may be set up and established in our souls; we are to desire the Lord would reign in our hearts, that he would be pleased to rule in our souls, and subdue our sinful lusts and evil inclinations, which are traitors and enemies unto him; we are to beg of him to dethrone the tyrant which has so long reigned in our breast, and to drive every *Canaanite* out of the land, and to make our souls a fit habitation for his good Spirit; we must desire that the Lord would be pleased to *bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ*; that the Lord would be pleased to rule us by his grace, and lead us by his Spirit; we are to beg of him to pass an act of indemnity for our former rebellion against him, and receive us into *his* service, who is our natural Lord and sovereign.

This, my brethren, must be our state if ever we would see God; unless we partake of the kingdom of grace here, we shall never partake of the kingdom of glory hereafter. Our blessed Redeemer

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must necessarily reign and exercise his spiritual kingdom in our hearts; our hearts must be renewed by his grace, and sanctified by his spirit; king Jesus *must reign* in our hearts *till he hath put all enemies under his feet*; we must experience our Redeemer as exercising his kingly office within us.

Let us then, my brethren, whenever we use this petition, let us beg of God that our hearts and souls may say, *thy kingdom come*; let us earnestly beg to be under his kingdom of grace here, that we may be admitted into his glorious one hereafter. But is this the case? do we really desire his kingdom may be established in our hearts whenever we repeat the Lord's prayer? On the contrary, are not the generality of us the servants and subjects of satan? Do we so much as desire to change our master? How then can we be guilty of such solemn mockery? O! beg of God to guide you aright, to inform you of the true meaning of this petition, and to enable you to say from the bottom of your hearts, *thy kingdom come*.

The next petition is, *thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven*. In this profession we profess to make an offering to God of our *spirits, souls, and bodies*, yielding ourselves unto him to perform his will and to do his pleasure: we desire, (I mean, if we are sincere) we desire that our wills may be conformed to the will of God. The believer implores the Spirit of God to rectify his depraved will, and to enable him to do the will of God. If we would  
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be the servants of God we must give up (freely give up) our own will, and desire to obey the will of God in every particular. The christian beseeches God in this petition to write his law in his heart, to stamp his image upon his soul, that he may in all things *order his conversation aright*; he desires that the will of God, in every particular, may be accomplished here on earth, as it is fulfilled in heaven. As the sun imparts light and heat to all, and as the moon, the stars, and all the powers of heaven perform their stated revolutions, and proceed in a regular and stated course, according to the will of God, so are christians to pray to him, that they also may persevere in their christian course, and in all things perform his will and pleasure.

Again. As angels, and archangels, and all the celestial choir, are ready to fulfil the commandments of God, as they are ever resounding his praises, and singing Hallelujahs to his name, as they are ever at hand *to succour and defend us on earth* when God wills and commands them so to do; in like manner are we to beg of God so to lead and direct us by his *godly motions*, that we may in all things obey his blessed will; we are to pray that the will of God may be accomplished in the conversion of all unbelievers, and in the sanctification of all his faithful people: and we are to make the hosts of heaven, and all the blessed spirits above, our pattern and example.

In heaven the will of God is constantly performed, there he meets with no opposition; the will of God is no where more controuled, than in the hearts of men: how ungrateful must we appear, even in our own eyes, when we reflect that we alone, of all God's creatures, bid defiance to his will? We have as great, perhaps, greater reasons (humanly speaking) to obey the will of God than the heavenly choir: they never had a Redeemer to shed his blood for them. Amazing that we, of all creatures, are the most indebted to God's goodness, that we, of all creatures, are the most disobedient to his will! Oh! let us beg of God to break these stony hearts of ours, to rectify our disorderly wills, (for by nature they are at enmity with God) and to lead us by his spirit to obey his will.

God's will, my brethren, is this: that you do not ruin yourselves for ever, that you embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and your Redeemer, and be made completely happy in him. Oh! do not despise these gracious offers, do not attempt to frustrate the will of God, when he wills your peace and eternal salvation; rather let us implore his Holy Spirit, that his *name* may be sanctified in our hearts, that his *kingdom* may be planted in our souls, that we may be able to perform his *will as it is in heaven*. In this manner our catechism explains these three petitions: *I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver*  
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*of all goodness, to send his grace unto me and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do.* Besides this, when the christian prays that God's will may be done, he is taught to submit to all the dispensations of providence, he desires the Lord would be pleased to enable him to submit to whatever he shall lay upon him; patience under afflictions, and resignation to the will of God under all adversities, are no easy lessons to learn. We are generally apt to imagine that we can assist God, as it were, that we can dictate to him a better method of proceeding than he usually observes, as if the *judge of all the earth* would not *do right*. Few attain to such an entire resignation to the will of God, as to be contented in the station he has placed them in. Beg of God then, my brethren, to enable you in all things to submit your wills to his, to convince you that all is for the best, that he visits you for your profit, that the afflictions he lays upon you shall minister to your spiritual advantage, that in his good time he will wholly remove them, or lessen the degree of them, or make you able to bear them. At the same time you pray for this holy frame and disposition of mind, look up by faith to your blessed master, and make him your pattern. When the blessed Jesus was in an agony for your sakes, when his human nature was ready to sink under the weight of his afflictions, when he was fainting and trembling under the cup of his Father's



ther's wrath, with what meekness and resignation did he at last submit! *Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* Let this, my brethren, be constantly in your remembrance, and, depend upon it, it will enable you, by God's grace, to submit chearfully to all trials and afflictions.

The next petition is, *give us this day our daily bread.* In this petition we are taught to pray to God for all temporal and spiritual blessings. In this petition we *pray unto God* (as our church observes) *that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies.* And, first, we are to pray unto God for fresh supplies of grace unto our souls. The spiritual gifts of God to his church are frequently compared in Scripture to *bread*; *I am the true bread*, saith Christ, *I am the bread which came down from heaven.* God invites us in the book of *Proverbs* to partake of his spiritual blessings, saying, *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled.* The grace and assistance of God's Holy Spirit are as necessary for our souls, as outward bread is requisite for our bodies. Abundant reason have we therefore to say, *Lord, evermore give us this bread.* We are not only to pray to God for a portion of his grace in general, but we are to ask for fresh supplies of it, *give us this day our daily bread.* Without bread the body cannot be supported. And, as the body requires daily recruits in order to its sustenance, so we stand  
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in need of constant, of daily supplies of God's Spirit to nourish our souls : we are, therefore, to implore his Spirit to give us a stedfast faith in him, and to endue us with grace that we may persevere. And, surely, we ought always to be praying to God for his grace and strength, when we consider what a variety of enemies we have to encounter with ; our own wicked hearts, a deceitful world, and our grand enemy the devil, are always laying traps in our way : how greatly then do we stand in need of help and spiritual support ?

Again. In this petition we are directed to call upon God for a supply of all our bodily wants. *Seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, we are to pray unto him for those temporal blessings we stand in need of. The christian knows that God hears his prayer, he can remember many instances of God's mercy in granting his requests ; the christian can rely on God with sure confidence, and is convinced he will provide for him ; he lays no stress on his own ingenuity, but commits himself to God ; he begs a blessing on his endeavours, and prays to him for all earthly blessings, because he has commanded him so to do. As he is *king of all the earth*, he is certainly able to grant our requests ; and, if we have a stedfast faith in Christ, we may be assured, (let things at present go how they will) we may be assured we shall never want : abundance, perhaps, we may never have, and God forbid we should, (for it too often proves a curse)

but *bread to eat and raiment to put on* we shall never want. Why should I distrust the providence of God? He who can give me eternal life can certainly provide food for my animal life, he who *feedeth the ravens* will surely feed his own servants; God declares, that *a sparrow does not fall to the ground* without his knowledge; nay, that *the very hairs of our head are all numbered*. This surely, then, is an encouragement to us to pray to God for a supply of all our wants: but then God will be trusted, God will be prayed to, and, if we will go on in our own way, and do not leave the event to him, we must thank ourselves for the disappointment; but, if we wait upon the Lord in humble faith, we may depend upon it he will grant our request. Sometimes we may *ask and receive not*, because we *ask amiss*, because we do not ask in faith, or because we ask the blessings of this life without desiring spiritual blessings, and then we may ask for the good things of this world that we may *consume them upon our lusts*; but we must first ask, yea, and ask earnestly too, for an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, and then we may safely *commit our cause to him who judgeth righteously*. But then we are not to be extravagant in our demands, we are not to dictate to him what he shall give, we are to submit to his providence, and desire him to give us such things as he in his infinite wisdom shall see fit and convenient for us; we are also to wait *daily* upon God with our requests, and there-



fore God often keeps us low that he may keep us humble; he gives his servants a small portion at a time, that they may attend the more closely upon him, that they may see his goodness every day in sending them fresh supplies. Indeed the rich and powerful are equally indebted to God's providence with the mean and indigent, and it is equally their interest to petition for *daily bread*; innumerable accidents, they know not of, may deprive them of their present possessions, or put it out of their power to enjoy them. Let us then, my brethren, constantly rely upon God, let us trust in his providence, let us beg of him to *give us food convenient for us*, and he has promised to hear us.

But I hasten to the next petition, which is, *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*.

In this petition we pray to God (as our excellent catechism observes) *that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins*. In this part we are to beg of God to forgive us our manifold sins and provocations against him. That God is able to extend his mercy to us all must allow, and that we stand in need of mercy none will deny. But this petition is not only designed for the unconverted; they indeed have great reason to *cry mightily unto God* for his pardoning grace and redeeming love, because, till they have it, they can expect nothing but vengeance at the hand of God; but the converted also have a share in this petition;

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the best of us, my brethren, have need to ask forgiveness at God's hand; *there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not. In many things we offend all.*

Believers, indeed, are looked upon as perfect in Christ their head, but in themselves, there are many secret sins; they have the remains of original sin lurking in their breasts, and they will always humble themselves in the sight of God; many enemies are yet unsubdued, and, therefore, we have all abundant reason to ask forgiveness and forbearance of God.

As we stand in need of mercy ourselves, we are also to extend mercy to our brethren; nay, in this prayer, we profess to ask God forgiveness no otherwise than as we forgive those who have injured us. This is the hardest lesson in the school of Christ; and since we cannot bring ourselves to this frame, let us beg of God to endue us with it; let us, at least, *desire* to forgive our enemies, and God will carry those desires into execution. But, perhaps, some may say, "I have been so grossly injured, so unkindly treated, that I cannot overlook it. The person who has injured me is really unworthy my forgiveness." Well, my brother, retire into your own heart. Have not you grossly offended your God and Saviour? Your enemy, you say, is unworthy: are not you, by nature, utterly unworthy of God's mercy? Are you not an enemy, a traitor, a rebel to God? If  
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then you desire his clemency should be extended to you, extend forgiveness to your offending brother. If you examine, you will find the same seeds of injustice lurking in your hearts, altho' God has been so merciful to you as not to suffer them to sprout into action. Remember the parable of the kind master, who forgave his servant *ten thousand talents*, which servant refused to *forgive his brother one hundred pence*. Remember what our Redeemer says, *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye, from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses*. Oh! beg of God to give you a charitable and forgiving spirit, because, till you have it, you shut yourself out of all title to the privileges of the Gospel, and deprive yourself of many opportunities of enjoying sweet intercourse and communion with your God. This sin of uncharitableness is, perhaps, one of the *Canaanites* that is not yet rooted out. Cry *mightily*, then, to God, beseech him continually to shew you your own hearts, that, being humbled for your own offences, you may the more readily excuse another.

Besides, the object of your resentment is more properly the object of your pity and compassion; if he is converted he demands your love. Read St. Paul's Epistle to *Philemon*, see how the Apostle expostulates with him in behalf of *Onesimus*; if he is unconverted, if he is a stranger to God, he really demands your pity; consider what a dan-  
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gerous state he is in. If your enemy was in danger of drowning, would you not gladly save his life? How much more, then, when he is in danger of everlasting destruction? Pray for him then, beg of God to save his soul. If you can but pray for your enemy, (as I before observed) you cannot imagine how it will open your soul and enlarge your heart; or, if you cannot yet pray for your brother, at least pray for *yourself*; beg of God to root out this gall of bitterness; it is a temptation that besets you, pray against it.

We are now arrived at the last petition in this divine composition; *and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

In the former part of this petition we pray to God, (as our church observes) *that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly and bodily*; we are to beg of God to preserve us in all dangers both of *flesh and spirit*. *Ghostly* means *spiritual*; it is derived from *ghost*, an old Saxon word, which signifies *spirit*. We are not to imagine that *God leads us into temptation*, for *God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man*, although for wise ends, he permits his servants to be tempted, in order to try their fidelity and trust in him.

Whenever we are tempted, my brethren, let us call upon God. When the christian is tempted from within, or tormented from without, when he can say, with the Apostle, *without are fightings,*  
*within*

*within are fears, then he is to apply to the Lord Jesus his Redeemer, who has promised to support him, who will not suffer him to be tempted above that he is able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.*

The last part of the petition is, *and deliver us from evil.* In this our church teaches us to pray to God *that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.* The evil then, we are to pray against is the evil of sin, and the evil of punishment; we are to beg of God to keep us from the evil of sin, *from all sin and wickedness* in which we are born, and to which we are liable; we are also to pray against the evil dominion of satan, our *ghostly* or *spiritual* enemy; and a bitter enemy he is, we can never pray too much against him: but above all should the sinner pray against the evil of punishment, against *everlasting death*; this is *the wages of iniquity*! and all who die without an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ will find, to their cost, everlasting death will be their portion. How ought we then, my brethren, to be earnest at the throne of grace, beseeching God to lead us by his good spirit, to preserve us from our enemy, and to unite us closely to himself? Oh! that the Lord of heaven would enable you all to cry out from the bottom of your hearts, Lord Jesus *deliver us from evil.*

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This prayer is generally closed with a doxology, and it is this: *for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.* Doxology means, *giving glory.* All prayers to God were used to conclude with giving glory to him, and, for this reason, our sermons end with ascribing glory to God. We acknowledge the *kingdom* to be the Lord's, and, as he is the king, he alone is able to make us partakers of his kingdom. *The power* also is God's; *God spake once*, saith David, *and twice I have also heard the same, that power belongeth unto God*, he, therefore, *is able and mighty to save us*, to hear our requests, and to endue us *with power from on high.* *The glory* is his; he, therefore, is able to glorify his servants, and these attributes belong unto him *for ever and ever.* *God never faileth*; earthly comforts may fail, but the *rock of ages*, the christian's defence, endureth for ever and ever, and will stand by him throughout all eternity.

All these requests we are to make known unto God; we are to pray to him (as I before observed) with a just sense of our own unworthiness: This will lead us out of ourselves, and teach us to offer up our petitions through the alone merits of our dear Redeemer. We are also to pray in faith, believing that God will grant our requests, we are to trust that he will hear us for Christ's sake. This also we are taught in our catechism: *And this I trust, he will do, of his mercy and goodness, through*

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our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis wholly owing to the riches of God's free grace in our Redeemer, that our prayers can be accepted, or, indeed, that we can pray at all.

This prayer is closed with an *Amen*; and therefore, (saith our church, viz. because Christ has opened the way to the throne of grace) *therefore I say amen. So be it.* *Amen* is an *Hebrew* word, signifying, *yea, verily, or so be it.* In this place, and at the end of all our addresses to God, it means *so be it*, a hearty wish that God would accomplish what we have been praying for.

This may teach us to be more guarded than we generally are, and not to repeat this word at the end of our prayers, (as is too commonly the case) while our thoughts are employed on different objects.

I am now to make an application of the whole to ourselves; but in this, (as I have endeavoured to apply every part as I have gone along) I shall be as brief as possible.

This, my brethren, is the comprehensive form of words composed by our dear Redeemer himself; it contains all we can desire or want, whether it be spiritual or temporal; and therefore, is a most perfect model for us to follow in all our addresses to the throne of grace. And here I cannot but commend (as it is my bounden duty) the excellent liturgy of our own church, which is entirely copied from this divine original. In our common prayer  
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all the petitions are truly christian, and all are offered up through the merits of Jesus Christ, Would to God all our Sermons had as much of Jesus Christ in them as our prayers have !

Let me recommend it to you, my brethren, to beg of God to give you the spirit of prayer. Do not be contented to use a form of words, but implore the spirit of God, that ye may be enabled to pray from your hearts.

And now, my brethren, how many of you attend to the Lord's prayer ? Do ye *pray*, or do ye *say* the Lord's prayer ? There is a great difference, and I would advise you to ask your own hearts the question. How can you disregard that divine form of words, when they were composed by God himself ? What signifies your saying a parcel of words, without paying the least attention to what you are about ? Would you not be affronted yourselves, was any one to treat you as you do your God ? Do you imagine God will hear you for your *much speaking* ? No : one wish from the heart, one *God be merciful to me a sinner*, will find its way to the throne of grace, and bring down a blessing, while *your* formal, hypocritical addresses will prove *an abomination to the Lord*.

May the Lord God convince you, my brethren, of the value of these graces this prayer teaches you to apply for. Did you but know how much you lose by neglecting to pray to God, you would no longer forbear to cry unto him. Was your  
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worldly interest to be promoted, you would embrace every opportunity: if you could all make your fortunes, if you could obtain large estates by waiting upon God, what a devout, religious people would you all be! why, you would pray without ceasing; then you would need no advice to use this method; at least you would not be offended at me for pressing this duty upon you.

And, my brethren, the time will come when you will be convinced I am not your enemy for speaking so plainly to you as I do. I should be a vile hypocrite if I did not; you yourselves would *rise up in judgment against me, and condemn me.*

To conclude. Let me beg of all here present to have some regard to their immortal souls. Do not, my dear brethren, do not, I intreat you, be *in love* with damnation, but beg of the Lord Jesus to *convert you from the errors of your ways.* Let us all wait on God in humble prayer, and desire his good spirit to lead us into all truth; and I desire you to join your hearts with mine in supplication to the throne of grace for *these things.*

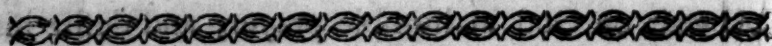
O! great and merciful Lord, our heavenly Father, who art the giver of all goodness, be pleased to sanctify thy name in all our hearts: soften, O Lord, every stony heart, and establish the kingdom of thy grace in every soul here present: make it our *meat and drink to do thy will, O God; as thy will is done in heaven,* let it also be *perfected in us.* Give us, O Lord, a constant supply of thy grace,

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and furnish us with *food convenient for us*. Pardon, O Lord, all our sins and transgressions, and enable us to forgive, from the bottom of our hearts, all those who *have trespassed against us*. Be present with us in our spiritual warfare; *cover our heads in the day of battle*; deliver us from the enemies of our souls; *keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from everlasting damnation* good Lord deliver us; *for thine is the kingdom*, make us partakers of it; shelter and defend us by thy *power*; and, after this life, receive us to thy *glory*, there to reign with thee for ever. And this we humbly beg through the alone merits of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, to whom, with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be ascribed all the honour and glory of man's redemption, now, henceforth, and for evermore. *Amen.*



## S E R M O N VII.

St. *John*, chap. iii. latter part of the 5th verse.

—*Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

**T**HIS was the answer our Lord gave a great master in *Israel*, who was not a little disconcerted at the assertion in the third verse: *Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto*

*unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

Learned as *Nicodemus* was, it put all the faculties of his mind on the stretch to comprehend the meaning of this saying. A glaring instance this of the insufficiency of the greatest endowments of the human mind, without the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. Human learning may make ample discoveries in the field of nature, may be of considerable use in the contemplation of outward objects; but when once it leaves its proper sphere, and aims at a knowledge of the things of God, it fails in the attempt, and is lost and bewildered in a maze of error. Nothing can direct the mind in pursuits of this nature, but the unerring dictates of the Holy Spirit, and they must be *all taught of God*, who would be perfect masters of divine knowledge; *we must be born again* before we can have any notion of the life of Christ. As no person can have any idea of sensible objects before he is born into the world, and has made some advances in it, so no one can have the least knowledge of, or any relish for spiritual truths, till, by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit breathing divine life into his soul, he is *become dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*; and, till God is thus pleased to inform the heart, the wisest of natural men will have very uncertain and confused notions of the spiritual blessings held forth in the gospel of Christ.



This was the case with *Nicodemus*; all his learning could not comprehend what our Redeemer meant by insisting on the necessity of a man's being *born again* before he could live in the life of faith. *Nicodemus* saith unto him, *how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?* While this answer proves the inability of man in his natural state to comprehend *the hidden things of God*, it may also account for the opposition men of learning generally make to the doctrines of the gospel. The gospel, when preached in faith and sincerity, never fails to alarm their pride; these men cannot bear to be told that all their attainments will not make them *wise unto salvation*, that they may have made very considerable progress in human learning, and yet be ignorant of the *one thing needful*. Many such do I know, who value themselves highly on account of their learning and outward acquirements, and yet are as ignorant of vital and experimental religion as the ground they tread on; who, *while they profess to be teachers of others, have need that some should teach them what are the first principles of the gospel of Christ*; these men, *professing themselves wise, become fools*. Such men, I say, will always be disgusted when they are told that they must throw aside all dependence on their own abilities, strip themselves of all fancied perfection, and be contented to come like *little children*, meek and humble, to the cross of Christ:

nor



nor need we wonder at this their opposition, since we are told by truth itself, that *the natural man cannot see these things, neither know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* But, whatever opposition these men may make to the doctrines of the gospel, they are nevertheless true, and demand our serious attention: however men may value themselves upon the dignity of their nature, the strength of their faculties, and depth of their learning, they must experience in themselves a real change, effected by the Spirit of God, before they can have any interest in the blessed mediator. *Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

This is the new birth, which every one must experience in his own soul *before he can enter into the kingdom of God.* The generality here present have been *born of water*, would to God they were also *born of the Spirit.* This is the grand thing you are to seek after; for, as a man must be born into the world before he can perform the various offices of animal life, so every soul *must be born again* of the Holy Spirit of God before it can take a single step in the life of Christ and of God; as without air the body cannot breathe, so without the Holy Spirit of God the soul is destitute of the principle of divine life.

Our own church agrees with the holy scriptures in pressing this point strongly upon us. In her

catechism she sets before us the gracious offers God has been pleased to make to fallen man thro' a mediator; she proceeds to inform us, that repentance and faith are indispensably necessary on our part, if we would have the comfortable promises of the gospel applied to ourselves; to convince us that our faith must not be a lifeless, inactive principle, she lays down the ten commandments of God to be observed by us as the fruit or sign of our faith; they are also delivered to the terror of the unconverted, that, by seeing how grossly they have violated the law of God, they may be led to ask for mercy through the blood of a mediator, and, that the best may not presume upon their own strength, we are told, we cannot do these things without *God's special grace*, which we are to apply for *by diligent prayer*.

This is one means of grace, one of those channels whereby God conveys spiritual assistance to all true believers: This is exhibited in the exposition of the Lord's prayer. The other means to be used are the sacraments, the first of which is *baptism*, which will be the subject of my following discourse.

I have made choice of these words, as containing a description of the outward and inward alteration this sacrament, when rightly received, is supposed to effect. From these words I propose to lay before you the nature and expediency of this sacrament, and to make a suitable application to ourselves.

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And may the holy and almighty Spirit of God be shed abroad in every heart here present; may his gracious influences be dispensed to every soul in this congregation; may he remove all objections and opposition to his gospel, and dispose every one that hears me this day to a serious attention to his holy word.

Before the sacrament of baptism is explained, there are some directions about sacraments in general. The catechumen is first asked, *How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his church?* The answer is, *two only, as generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord.* *Two only*, in contra-distinction to the *Romish* church, which insists on five more, *viz.* confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction; which are by no means to be called sacraments, because they are no where laid down in scripture for such, nor are any of them absolutely necessary to salvation.

Confirmation, or the laying on of hands on such as have been baptized, is indeed an apostolical rite, very useful when rightly received, and is very proper to be retained; but this is no where insisted on by Christ himself, but was instituted by the Apostles after his death, who *went about confirming the churches* who had received the gospel, which churches, no doubt, received the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit by this solemn ordinance: in imitation of their practice, the bishops



of the christian church in all succeeding ages have observed this rite, exercising it especially on those who were baptized in their infancy, imploring the Spirit of God to enable them to perform the vows made for them in baptism. Thus far is this institution innocent and allowable; and thus far, and no farther, does our church enforce it.

The next pretended sacrament is penance. This, as such, is no where insisted on in scripture, nor has it any of those properties which more immediately constitute a sacrament. Penance, indeed, *viz.* some certain acts of mortification, punishing ourselves in what may have been unto us *an occasion of falling*, is not only in some cases useful, but is also an emblem of inward sorrow for sin, and is in some degree authorized by our church; but when carried to the extravagant height the church of *Rome* places it in, is certainly repugnant to the will of God, because that church looks on certain acts of penance performed by her seeming penitents as meritorious of mercy. This is certainly making a Christ of man's performances, and consequently wrong; for, after all, there is *none other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The next thing to be observed, or rather, to be disregarded as a sacrament in the popish calendar, is orders, *viz.* holy orders, such as that of bishops, priests, and deacons. This can by no means

means be reckoned necessary to salvation, nor is it any where insisted on by Christ, nor expected to be observed by all his followers. A sacrament, as we shall see hereafter, is equally obligatory on all orders and degrees of men, but holy orders are given, and were designed to be given, only to one set of men, therefore holy orders can be no sacrament; not but that orders are of divine institution; the care of souls is a great concern, enough to make those tremble who undertake it; they stand in need of the prayers of all faithful people, that they may discharge their duty properly: for my own part, I am sensible of the importance of the charge committed to me; I am sensible likewise of my own infirmities, and therefore desire your prayers that I may be found faithful: I am already counted a fool and a madman, (I pray God I may continue so!) therefore you, my dear, because despised friends, will not be surprized when I desire you to pray for me, *that after having preached to others, I myself may not be a castaway.*

Matrimony is the next thing the papists term a sacrament. This, as the former, is not obligatory on all men, consequently is no sacrament. The papists themselves assure us it is not binding on all men, by the various orders of unmarried men among them. This, however is an ordinance of God himself, which, for my own part, I believe every man is bound to enter into, unless prevented by

by some impediment, and is withal an honourable estate.

The last of this popish trumpery to be considered as a sacrament is extreme unction. The meaning of extreme unction is anointing the head of a dying person, and, so infatuated are the papists, that they firmly believe, if a person is thus anointed before he dies, he is certainly happy. Here again, as our formal nominal christians make a Christ of their own works, so these besotted bigots make a Christ of extreme unction. God keep us, my brethren, in the enjoyment and exercise of the protestant religion.

I could have produced arguments from scripture to invalidate these pretended sacraments of the papists, had I not been fearful of trespassing on your time; but, at present, the determination of our own church, in her twenty-fifth article, will, I hope, be deemed sufficient. “ There are two  
 “ sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the  
 “ gospel, namely, baptism and the supper of the  
 “ Lord. Those five, commonly called sacra-  
 “ ments, *viz.* Confirmation, penance, orders, ma-  
 “ trimony, and extreme unction, are not to be  
 “ counted for sacraments of the gospel, being  
 “ such as have grown partly out of the corrupt  
 “ following of the Apostles, partly are states of  
 “ life allowed by the scriptures, but yet have not  
 “ like nature of sacraments with baptism and the  
 “ Lord’s supper, for that they have not any visi-  
 “ ble



“ble sign or ceremony ordained of God.” This is another reason. Sacraments must be attended “with *outward visible signs*, but these have not any, therefore they are no sacraments.”

But an observance of the two gospel sacraments is insisted on in scripture, and is our bounden duty; they are said to be *generally necessary to salvation*, not absolutely so, that salvation cannot be attained without them; but they are *generally necessary to salvation*, they are the stated ordinary means, the channels by which God has promised to convey his grace and spirit to all true believers; therefore it is the duty of every christian to wait humbly in the use of these ordinances, where they may be had, but where they cannot (which must happen in such places as are destitute of a regular ministry) we dare not say they are absolutely necessary, not set limits to God's power and goodness: he, by a word of his mouth, can soften the hardest heart, (and often does so) and can carry on the divine life in a soul by extraordinary means; and all those who are earnest in their enquiries after God may expect (if they are deprived of the ordinary means) they shall be comforted by an inward happy communion with their Lord.

Having seen that there are two sacraments in the gospel system, and that it is our indispensable duty to observe them, they being *generally necessary to salvation*, it will not be improper to fix the meaning of the word, that we may know what the word

word sacrament implies; and this is done to our hand in the answer to the next question, which is this: *What meanest thou by this word sacrament?* The answer is, *I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.* This is the meaning of the word.

A sacrament is composed of certain symbols, which are designed to exhibit certain spiritual graces and blessings: by using the outward signs, we declare our desire of receiving the inward grace those outward signs are intended to represent. We proclaim to all the world our christian profession, by using the ordinances our master has appointed: but, besides this, the devout and serious christian, who uses these ordinances in humble faith, is really made a partake of the inward and spiritual grace; and these outward signs are to him a seal or pledge to assure him of his interest in a Redeemer. This too is confirmed by the article already quoted.

“ Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges  
 “ or tokens of christian mens profession, but rather they be certain, sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God’s good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.” We see, then, that there are two sacraments in the christian church, that they are *generally necessary to*

*salva-*



*salvation*, that the meaning of the word sacrament is an *outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace*, an appeal and evidence to our senses of spiritual gifts and graces: by these we are given to understand, that the grace of God operates on the soul in a similar manner with that in which the outward symbols operate on the body. And, farther, we have seen, that sacraments are not only a badge of our profession, not only a sign of grace, but, to all worthy receivers, they are *a pledge to assure them of it*. That we may have still a clearer idea of the sacraments of Christ, a division is made in the answer to the next question, which is this: *How many parts are there in a sacrament?* The answer is, *two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace*.

Each sacrament consists of two parts, the sign, and the thing signified. Water in baptism is the outward sign, regeneration is the inward spiritual grace; the water is a visible emblem of an invisible grace. So again bread and wine, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, are the outward signs; the body and blood of Christ, or spiritual communion with him, is the thing signified. These symbols are a help to our faith, these ordinances are the channels through which God has promised to dispense grace and peace to all true penitents and worthy receivers: but, then, as spiritual grace will always accompany the outward sign to those who use those ordinances in humble faith,



faith, so there is such a thing as a man's receiving either of them unworthily, and in that case he only enhances his guilt.

By this division of a sacrament into two parts, we may clearly deduce, that a person may receive the *outward visible sign*, and be entirely destitute of the *inward spiritual grace*: many a man has been baptized with water, who never received the Holy Ghost; many a man has received the bread and wine, who never received the body and blood of Christ. It is not receiving the outward elements of water in baptism, nor of the bread and wine at the Lord's supper, which constitutes a christian, unless he be made partaker of the inward and spiritual grace of the gospel. It is not an outward homage or adoration of the elements that will answer the end designed by them, it is not receiving the bread and wine ever so often that will do, unless the *body and blood of Christ be received* also. Those only who are sensible they want a physician, and who pant after a knowledge of Jesus Christ, are benefited by these ordinances.

This too is confirmed by the latter part of the article abovementioned. "The sacraments were  
 "not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to  
 "be carried about, but that we should duly use  
 "them; and, in such only who worthily receive  
 "the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation; but, they that *receive them unworthily*,  
 "pur-

“purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul  
“saith.”

A sacrament, then, consists of two parts, *the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.*

Thus much for sacraments in general.

Our church, having explained the nature and meaning of sacraments in general, proceeds to consider and explain each sacrament apart. And, first, the catechumen is asked the nature of baptism in the four following questions, the first of which is this: *What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism?* The answer is, *Water, wherein the person is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* This is the first part, *the outward visible sign.* Water, in scripture, is made an emblem of the holy spirit of God, and his gracious operations. As water tends to cleanse and purify the body, so does the spirit of God operate on all who receive this ordinance rightly, and cleanses and purifies their souls. For this reason water is used in baptism.

Baptizing with water is the appointed means of admitting persons into the christian church: It was commanded by Christ, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing, or washing, them, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Now the Apostles, and, since them, all ministers of Christ, can only baptize with water: it must be God who baptizes mens hearts *with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* This, then, is sufficient to prove the necessity and  
4 useful-

usefulness of water-baptism, it was enjoined by Christ himself. Water is mentioned in the text, as well as the Holy Ghost; *except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Let those, then, who dare deride this practice, even the outward ordinance only, remember they are deriding the positive command of Christ. I mean not by this to give offence to scrupulous consciences, God forbid; I mean only to restrain that indecent derision of water-baptism, which is too common with some in these our days. I would not, however, be thought to lay a stress upon the first part of water-baptism only, far from it; I shall clear myself of this charge presently; what I would now enforce is this; baptizing, *i. e.* washing or sprinkling with water, is an ordinance instituted by Christ, to which he has promised to annex inward grace and strength to all his faithful people; it is, besides, the outward form of admitting members into the outward church. The church can only administer the outward sign, and we must leave them to God for the receipt of inward and spiritual grace. All bodies have a form of admitting members into their societies, and this is ours. As it is, therefore, an ordinance of Christ himself, it is our bounden duty to use it.

The outward sign, then, is *water*, an emblem of the spirit, *wherein the person is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*



*Ghost.* This is the only Lord and God of christians, and therefore we are baptized into this name.

Having informed us of the first part of baptism, our catechism proceeds to explain to us the spiritual baptism imparted to all the elect people of God. This is done in the answer to the next question, which is this: *What is the inward and spiritual grace?* The answer is, *A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.* This is the thing signified; every man by nature is a child of wrath; we were born in sin, and have a propensity to nothing that is good; *the thoughts of man's heart, in his natural state, are only evil continually;* nothing less than the almighty spirit can renew a heart, and bring it home to God; all who would be partakers of eternal happiness, must experience this baptism of the Holy Spirit. Sinners are first drawn by the spirit of God to a serious consideration of gospel truths, they are convinced of sin, they are enabled to see their own wretchedness, and the need they have of a redeemer; they are humbled under a sense of their sins, and they are made to see their interest in him; they are comforted under a sense of these things, and they know, by happy experience, that the *Lord Jesus* is indeed *their God*; they are assured, (let who will gainsay it I care not, for I will say it, and I have the authority of scripture

and our own church to bear me out, for our homilies are full of it) they are *assured*, I say, that their sins are forgiven; *the Spirit itself beareth witness with their spirits that they are the children of God.*

This, my brethren, is the *inward and spiritual grace*; all who receive baptism *rightly* (adult persons especially) receive and experience the renovating power of the spirit of God. The grace, then, annexed to the outward ordinance in this sacrament is, *a death unto sin*; they become dead unto sin, that they may live unto God. The next thing is, *a new birth unto righteousness*; the new birth is what you must experience in your hearts, *you must be born again*; you have been *born of water*, beg of God to *baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* All your faculties, your understandings, your wills and affections, must be renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God. Your Redeemer has told you, *except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God.*

And now, my brethren, permit me to ask you, Have you been *baptized with the Holy Ghost*? It is a serious question, and deserves your serious consideration. Have you been made to see your blindness and wretchedness? Have you seen Christ as your Redeemer by the eye of faith? Have you seen your sins pardoned in his blood? Has the *Holy Ghost come upon you, and the power of the Highest overshadowed you*? Are ye led by his spirit? Is your corrupt nature cleansed? Do ye detest and abhor sin,  
and



and long to be dissolved and be with Christ? In a word, have you felt the spirit of God speaking peace unto your hearts, and do you find *all joy and peace in believing*? If so, *happy are ye*, may your whole lives be devoted to his service. If you have not experienced these blessed effects, you have never been baptized; you have, indeed, been admitted into the outward church, the outward ordinance by water has been administered to you, but, unless you have been made partakers of the divine nature, you are not a whit the better. Only use your reason; baptism is called regeneration; now can you say you have been regenerated while you continue in sin, while your hearts are strangers to God? What sort of thing is a regenerate drunkard, a regenerate sabbath-breaker, a regenerate blasphemer, a regenerate whore-monger, a regenerate adulterer? The terms are a contradiction; and yet many of you are affronted if you are told that you are no christians; many of you, because you have been baptized with water, conclude you are christians. Christians! God help such christians; you are baptized heathens, if you please, but christianity you are strangers to. O! do not flatter yourselves, but resolve to implore the spirit of God to seal your pardon to you.

If this appears wrong, you may remember, yourselves allow a man may receive the Lord's supper unworthily. Our twenty-ninth article saith, "The wicked eat not the body and blood of Christ,



“ though they may press the bread with their  
 “ teeth ;” and, by a parity of reasoning, a man  
 may receive baptism unworthily. As bread and  
 wine in the Lord’s supper are the outward signs,  
 and can be of no service without the body and  
 blood of Christ, so, in water-baptism, the outward  
 sign can be of no service without the regeneration  
 or new birth ; but all who are *thus* baptized are  
 immediately *passed from death unto life* ; for, as our  
 catechism observes, *being by nature born in sin, they*  
*are hereby*, by the regenerating efficacy of the blef-  
 sed spirit, *made the children of grace*. This also is  
 the sense of our church in her twenty-seventh arti-  
 cle, intituled, of *baptism*. “ Baptism is not only  
 “ a sign of profession and mark of difference,  
 “ whereby christian men are discerned from others  
 “ that be not christened, but it is also a sign of  
 “ regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an  
 “ instrument, they that receive baptism rightly  
 “ are grafted into the church ; the promises of the  
 “ forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be  
 “ the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly  
 “ signed and sealed. Faith is confirmed, and  
 “ grace increased, by virtue of prayer unto God.”

We may see this, *viz.* that we must experience  
 this change in ourselves, from the qualifications  
 required in all who would receive baptism rightly :  
 for, after the explanation of true spiritual baptism,  
 the catechumen is asked, *What is required of per-  
 sons to be baptized?* The answer is, *Repentance*  
*whereby*

*whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament. Here are repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which, are what our Lord ordered his Apostles, and in them all succeeding ministers, to preach to men, that they might obtain remission of their sins. These are the qualifications required of all those who would be baptized with the Holy Ghost: they must repent from the bottom of their hearts of all their sins; they must be convinced of their own vileness, and come humbly to the throne of grace; they must likewise have faith in Christ; they must believe that God will make good all the promises in his word. And it would be well, for it is necessary, that all they who are of riper years, and who apply for baptism, would beg of God to give them these qualifications, that, at the same time they are baptized with water, they may be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, that they may truly repent them of all their former sins, and stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament; that God will accompany the outward ordinance with inward spiritual grace. You who have been baptized with water, but have never been born of the spirit, beg of God to begin the salvation work in your hearts, and to carry it on unto perfection.*

Now, before men can be furnished with these requisites, they must arrive at the use of their reason. Infants then, when baptized, while they are



such, are incapable of these things. This is provided for in the next question and answer. The question is, *Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age, they cannot perform them?* The answer is, *Because they promise them both by their sureties; which promise when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.* Children, born in a christian country, are (as they certainly ought to be) dedicated to God in baptism in their early years, not that they are sensible of their state by nature, nor of their want of mercy, but, this being the stated form of admitting members into the outward church, it ought certainly to be complied with. We have an express command for it by Christ himself, *Go teach all nations, baptizing them.* Now in all nations must be included all ages. We have the authority of an Apostle to assert, that the *children of believing parents* are profited by this ordinance. The passage is this: *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* This is also confirmed by an authority which, I hope, I shall always esteem next to the word of God, and that is the authority of our own church, in the latter part of the article last-mentioned: “The baptism of  
 “ young children is in any wise to be retained in the  
 “ church, as most agreeable with the institution of  
 “ Christ.” Not that I would insinuate, with some  
 moderns, that all children are regenerated in baptism,



tism, *i. e.* baptized with the Holy Ghost. The lives and conversations of too many of them, when they arrive at years of maturity, convince us to the contrary; but those who die in their infancy (in my humble opinion) are taken from the evil to come, and are made partakers of the promised redemption; and for this also I have the authority of our own church in the rubric subjoined to the office for public baptism of infants: "It is certain by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." In obedience then to Christ's command, we ought to administer baptism to infants; and, altho' they are incapable of repenting and believing, *their sureties* undertake that they shall be *brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and be admonished to apply to God for the *inward spiritual grace*.

This is the bounden duty of all *godfathers and godmothers*, and the Lord have mercy upon all those who take this office upon them slightly and at random. Our church indeed has enjoined, in one of her canons, that no one shall be admitted as a godfather or godmother who is not a communicant; but (such is the iniquity and degeneracy of these times that) this order cannot be well complied with: But I would advise all such persons to consider seriously what a solemn obligation they lay themselves under, and to remember that God will most certainly require a performance of it at their hands.

Thus having gone through with the sacrament of baptism, I shall detain you no longer than while I invite all unregenerate persons to seek earnestly for this baptism of the spirit. Believe me, my brethren, if there is any truth in the word of God, nothing short of this can possibly secure your eternal salvation. Be not such enemies to your own souls, as to neglect these important things; do not depend on your having been baptized with water, if you fall short of the grace of God. Now, my brethren, the spirit of God is striving with you, now the blessed Jesus is waiting to see whether you will accept his gracious offers. Do not let the Saviour of the world intreat in vain. Do, my brethren, think of your immortal souls. Let me not go away without having moved one soul; send me not to my master complaining that no one *hath believed my report*. My dear brethren, I feel for you, Little do you think of the danger you are in. Flee for your lives to the blessed Jesus, who has promised to receive you.

Have you been notorious sinners? Fear not, it was for notorious sinners Christ Jesus shed his blood; and, if you do but see your want of a Redeemer, the work is half done. Implore the spirit of God to lead you to the throne of grace, try the experiment, which no one ever yet hath tried in vain. Go humbly to your blessed Redeemer, and may he be pleased to speak rest and peace unto your souls.

*Amen*

S E R M O N



## S E R M O N VIII.

First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. x. ver. 16.

*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

**I**N this part of the chapter the Apostle proceeds to caution the *Corinthians* against idolatry; he advises them by no means to be present at the sacrifices and feasts which were held in honour of the heathenish idols; he informs them, that, by their partaking of those feasts, they discarded the true God, and professed themselves the servants of those imaginary deities: not that those gods had any existence, (but in the corrupt imaginations of their respective votaries) but that they were such as the devil set up in their hearts, and tempted them to worship, in opposition to the God of heaven; and, consequently, by partaking of sacrifices of his devising, they would immediately enter into league and covenant with him. *What say I then, saith the Apostle, that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God:*



*God : And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.*

The argument the Apostle uses to convince them that they would enter into communion with devils by being present at the heathenish sacrifices, is taken from that spiritual communion which every true believer enters into with the blessed Jesus at his heavenly table : he declares in the text, that those who partake worthily of the bread and wine at the Lord's table, are really made partakers of the body and blood of Christ ; and from thence he infers, that those who partake of the devil's sacrifices are lifted into his service, and initiated into the deep mysteries of hell.

This is what the Apostle infers from the position in the text. It is not my present design to enlarge on the justice of this conclusion, but to confine myself to illustrate the doctrine contained in the text, *viz.* that all believers in the sacrament of the Lord's supper enter into spiritual communion with Christ their head.

And may the holy and eternal Spirit of God take every soul here present into his good keeping ; may he remove all prejudices from our hearts, and dispose us to receive with meekness the blessed word of his grace.

*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? I shall confine myself to this subject, because it will*

will be a matter of the greatest improvement to us; this also I am led to enlarge on by our christian catechism, which, having explained to us the nature and expediency of the former sacrament of baptism, proceeds to set before us the nature and benefits of the other ordinance or means of grace set up by our Lord, commonly called the Lord's supper.

Sacraments in general have been explained in the beginning of this part of the catechism. A sacrament is defined to be *an outward visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.*

According to this definition the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper are explained: the former of these has been dispatched already. The catechumen is next examined concerning the cause, the nature, benefits, and advantages of the Lord's supper. The reason of the institution is given in the answer to the following question: *Why was the sacrament of the Lord's supper ordained?* The answer is, *For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.*

This sacrament was ordained by Christ himself. It was instituted by him at his last supper; he commanded his disciples to hand it down to all succeeding ages in remembrance of him; it was designed to be a memorial of his death and passion;

it



it was not only designed to be a *remembrance*, but a *CONTINUAL remembrance of the death of Christ*. Believers, indeed, often commemorate the death of their Redeemer in their spiritual communion with him, but he who knew the infirmities incident to human nature, set up this monument in his church as a help to our weakness. In this ordinance he makes use of our senses to convince us of the spiritual blessings conveyed to all the worthy receivers thereof. This ordinance was designed to be a *continual remembrance*, which implies, that it was to be used *continually*. Believers, in this state of pilgrimage, have daily need of spiritual communion with their Lord; and as this ordinance was more immediately designed to convey this to them, it follows, that it should be often used.

But further. This sacred ordinance was not only designed as a *continual remembrance of the death of Christ*, but it was ordained for a *continual remembrance of the SACRIFICE of the death of Christ*. Believers, in this ordinance, do not only profess to remember that such an one as Christ did formerly live upon the earth, but they remember, to their unspeakable comfort, that Christ was *their* sacrifice, that he died for *their* sins; for *the sacrament of the Lord's supper was ordained for a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the BENEFITS which we receive thereby*. All worthy receivers of this ordinance remember  
the



the inestimable benefits, viz. pardon and peace, arising to them from the bitter death and passion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This sacrament, then, was set up by Christ in his church as a monument of his love, that his people might have constantly before their eyes a memorial of his death, and of the invaluable blessings purchased for them by that his death. This ordinance was not to cease with the Apostles, but was continually to be used as *a continual remembrance* of these inestimable privileges: therefore we read the Apostles, after our Lord's ascension, were frequently employed in *breaking bread from house to house*. The Apostle Paul saith, *as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*. The primitive christians were scrupulously exact in the observance of this solemn rite, they seldom (never, indeed, on the Lord's day) held any religious meetings without partaking of the holy eucharist. Would to God that this practice was still observed in these our days!

To proceed. A sacrament, as was observed in my last discourse, consists of two parts, *an outward visible sign, and an inward spiritual grace*.

The outward sign, which is the first part of this sacrament, is shewn in the answer to the next question, which is this: *What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's supper?* The answer is, *Bread*  
and

and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

These outward elements our Redeemer commanded to be received as a sign and pledge of those spiritual blessings he has promised to confer on all worthy receivers of this sacrament. *Bread*, we all know, is *the staff of life*, the main support of our animal life; this our Lord pitched upon to give us an idea of his body, which is *the staff of our spiritual life*, the chief support of our souls; therefore Christ saith, *I am the true bread which came down from heaven; the bread which I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* Wine is a generous exhilarating liquor, capable of restoring our exhausted spirits; *wine maketh glad the heart of man.* This, in scripture and in this ordinance, is made an emblem of the Redeemer's blood, that sovereign restorative from spiritual gloominess and despondence: *I am the true vine*, saith Christ; *my Father is the husbandman.* And again, *I am the vine, ye are the branches.* Melchizedech (who was Christ) met Abraham with these symbols of bread and wine.

These symbolical representations very aptly denote the cheering influences of *the body and blood of Christ* applied to the souls of believers. As bread tends to support, and wine to nourish the body, so do *the body and blood of Christ* support, nourish, and preserve the soul of every true believer. This is *the outward sign which Christ has commanded*

*commanded to be received*: it is our bounden duty to receive these emblems in the way and manner he has appointed; for, altho' the receiving the outward elements alone is by no means communicating with Christ, yet these signs were set up in the church by Christ himself, they are the channels through which he has promised to convey grace and peace to every worthy receiver. Christ has commanded us to use the means. When he brake the bread he said, *take, eat, this is my body*; when he took the cup, he said, *drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for you, and for many for the remission of sins*; and then closes all with this affectionate yet solemn injunction, *this do in remembrance of me*.

Here, then, we see Christ has commanded us to use the means, and here too we may see the error of the papists, who deny the cup to the laity, who insist that none but the priests have a right to the wine; whereas our Lord instituted and gave this sacrament in both kinds; he not only said *EAT*, but *DRINK ye all of this*; and St. Paul in writing to the *Corinthians*, who were composed of laity as well as clergy, says, *as oft as ye eat this bread and DRINK THIS CUP, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*. Here he affirms, or, at least, implies, that they not only *eat* the bread but *drank* of the cup. Again. *The rock* from whence, by *Moses's* speaking, *the water gushed out*, was a type of Christ; the water was a type of his blood. St. Paul



proves it, for he says, *that rock is Christ*; and he says also, that *the people drank of that rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ*. Besides, the papists, in support of their favourite doctrine of transubstantiation, frequently urge this text, *except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you*; although these words, it is thought, were not spoken of a sacramental eating and drinking of his body and blood: but the fallacy of this doctrine shall be shewn in its proper place; at present we are to shew their error in denying the cup to the laity or people. If these words are really to be understood of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, (as they would insinuate) how will they get off of the latter part of the verse? Christ not only saith, *except ye eat my flesh*, but, *except ye DRINK MY BLOOD ye have no life in you*. How then can they dare deny, (even upon their own principle) how can they deny the cup to the laity? Our own church expresses her abhorrence of this tenet in her thirtieth article: "The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people, for both the parts of the Lord's sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all christian men alike."

*The outward part or sign then of the Lord's supper is bread and wine, which he hath commanded to be received*; both these are to be received, neither of them to be omitted, lest we be found to despise  
his

his commandments; but, altho' this is a part, it is not the whole. Altho' you are by all means to receive the outward ordinance, yet you are by no means to rest in it; the bread and wine will be of no use to you, unless they are made the means of sealing to your souls the comfortable effects of the body and blood of Christ.

And this brings us to the consideration of the second part of this sacrament, which is explained in the following question and answer: the question is, *What is the inward part or thing signified?* The answer is, *The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper.* Bread and wine are the signs of the body and blood of Christ, the things signified; these are absolutely conveyed to the soul of every believer in this ordinance. The effects of the outward elements of bread and wine on our bodies are designed to convey to us an idea of the spiritual refreshment conveyed to every faithful soul in this sacrament; and so surely as the bread and wine enter into and nourish the body of the receiver, does Christ Jesus enter into the souls of his faithful servants, nourishing and supporting them unto eternal life. Lord, what condescension is this! how kind art thou, O merciful Jesus, thus to humble thyself for thy people's sakes! to reside in them, and to dwell in them, and to fill them with the presence of thy glorious Godhead!

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O, what a blessed, what a loving master does the christian serve.

This, my brethren, is properly to receive the blessed sacrament, to receive the holy Jesus into our souls, to experience him in our hearts as a merciful, sin-atoning God. O, may all that hear me this day experience this for themselves!

The true believer, then, who approaches the holy table with humble reverence and godly fear, beholds the Saviour whom his soul seeketh after; he is enabled, by the Spirit of God, to see his Redeemer expiring on the cross for his salvation; in his eyes the mangled body of the crucified Jesus is evidently set forth in the bread broken; in his eyes the copious streams of his master's precious blood are clearly visible in the wine poured forth. Now is he melted into tears of holy joy. How is he affected when he reflects on his sins which occasioned these sufferings! how is he humbled under a sense of his own unworthiness! Again: how is he comforted when he sees his help laid on one willing and mighty to save! how is he transported when he sees his sins nailed to his Redeemer's cross! when he sees that Redeemer has procured his pardon, and *of God is made unto him wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption!* and the humble returning penitent not only sees these things in the outward elements by the eye of faith, but, by the same glorious principle, he

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receives



receives the body and blood of his dying master.

O, what comfort must that soul experience with whom the blessed Jesus vouchsafes to dwell!

This is really the case with every worthy receiver. *The body and blood of Christ, which are* VERILY AND INDEED *taken by the faithful,* saith our catechism. The worthy communicant, as our church observes, spiritually eats the flesh of Christ and drinks his blood; he is one with Christ and Christ with him, Christ dwelleth in him and he in Christ: to the true believer Christ Jesus is truly present in this ordinance. Many souls have experienced this to their unspeakable comfort; many sinners who have gone to that table in fear and trembling, have returned glad and rejoicing. God grant every soul here present, may feel the same effects whenever they repair to the Lord's table. This, then, should induce every repenting sinner, every one who is in earnest, to embrace all opportunities of resorting to this banquet of love. You who neglect this ordinance know not what inestimable blessings you rob yourselves of; for all who receive this ordinance rightly, do actually perceive and know that the Lord Jesus is present with them. This is implied in the text: *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* Communion with and communication from the Redeemer. Believers in this ordinance enjoy sweet intercourse and

delightful communion with their master, and he communicates to them all spiritual gifts and graces: besides this, they enjoy christian communion with their brethren, with the mystical body of Christ, and are carried forth in love to all their master's people; they feel their souls enlarged with love to their brethren, and have really a happy and delicious repast. The instrument by which these blessed effects are conveyed to their souls is faith, faith in the blessed Jesus, which is the gift of God wrought in them by his Spirit, filling them *with all joy and peace in believing*. As this is the language of scripture, so is it the determination of our own church in the former part of her twenty-eighth article. "The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, *the bread which we break* is a partaking of *the body of Christ*, and likewise *the cup of blessing* is a partaking of *the blood of Christ*."

These are the happy consequences of a worthy participation of the holy eucharist; but, then, when I say Christ is really present to every receiver in this ordinance, I would be understood to mean, that he is *spiritually* present; I mean not that he is carnally and corporally present, far from it; Christ's body is in heaven, and not on earth: he



is present to his servants by virtue of his Godhead, yet his human nature cannot be in more places than one at the same time; much less would I be understood to insinuate, that the outward elements of bread and wine undergo the least change as to their substance; God forbid! by faith, indeed, the christian, under these symbols, (not in them) receives the body and blood of Christ; but the elements are the same, they by no means are converted into the body and blood of Christ; the very thought, I believe is blasphemy; least of all would I think that the elements are so changed as to become the gross material body and blood of Christ, and therefore objects of our adoration and worship; *this were abominable idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful christians.* The papists indeed, (God keep us, my brethren, from their delusions) the papists, I say, think to build this blasphemous doctrine on these words of Christ, *the bread which I will give is my flesh.* Now these words, as I observed before, were not spoken of the sacrament, nor had they any relation to it. But then, say they, Christ said, at the institution of this sacrament, *take, eat, this is my body;* and again, *drink, this is my blood:* and that they are his spiritual body and blood we profess to believe, but we cannot believe the words in a literal sense; as, for various reasons, which, I presume I need not multiply to a protestant assembly; so, particularly, because Christ saith in scripture, *I am the good*



*shepherd, I am the vine, and again, I am the door;* now no one will infer from thence that Christ was or is a material vine or a real door; and, till they can prove this, they can never prove the doctrine of transubstantiation. This error is justly censured by our church in the latter part of the article last mentioned: “ Transubstantiation, or the  
“ change of the substance of bread and wine in  
“ the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by  
“ holy writ, but it is repugnant to the plain words  
“ of scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sa-  
“ crament, and hath given occasion to many su-  
“ perstitions.—The body of Christ is given,  
“ taken, and eaten in the supper, only after an  
“ heavenly and spiritual manner, and the mean  
“ whereby the body of Christ is received and  
“ eaten in the supper is faith. The sacrament  
“ of the Lord’s supper was not by Christ’s ordi-  
“ nance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or  
“ worshipped.”

But every worthy receiver of this ordinance is a real partaker of the body and blood of Christ, his pardon is sealed, and he finds grace to help in time of need.

And now, my brethren, permit me to ask you this serious question: have you received the body and blood of Christ? Many of you have this day received the bread and wine; have you, I say, received the body and blood of Christ? If you think the end is answered by receiving the out-ward

ward visible sign alone, you are guilty of the very same absurdity with those who imagine they have received the Holy Ghost because they have been baptized with water. But let me advise you to ask your own hearts the question. Have you this day met the Lord Jesus at his holy table? If you have, you cannot but know it: if a man is freed from pain under which he has long laboured, he cannot but be sensible of that freedom, and if you have been freed from the weight of sin, you cannot but know it; if you have never felt the weight of sin, I am sure, as yet, Christ has been of no service to you. O do not be deluded, but beg of God, the next time you repair to the holy table, to manifest himself unto you, and to *send forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts*, that ye may be enabled to cry, *Abba, Father*. This is the privilege of every true believer; God grant it may be yours. The experience of the spirit of God on the soul is not an argument of a crazy head, nor of a bad constitution; for St. John saith, *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his SPIRIT*. You may, indeed, despise and deride what I am now advancing; and, if you are determined so to do, I cannot help it: you may think all is safe because you sometimes approach the Lord's table, and receive the outward sign; but it is my duty to ask you, have you received the Lord Jesus into your hearts by faith? Has the Redeemer spoke peace



unto your souls? A man may receive the outward sign, and be not a whit the better. If you will not believe me, hear your own church in her twenty-ninth article.

“The wicked, and such as be void of a lively  
“faith, although they do carnally and visibly press  
“with their teeth (as St. *Augustin* saith) the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in no  
“wise are they partakers of Christ; but rather,  
“to their condemnation, do eat and drink the  
“sign or sacrament of so great a thing.”

The word of God expressly declares, that they who receive unworthily, *Eat and drink damnation to themselves*: they are in a state of separation from God while they thus receive: and if those are not unworthy receivers who pride themselves on their taking the outward ordinance, who do not see they are lost, undone sinners, and who do not desire to be cloathed with the righteousness of Christ; if such as these, I say, be not unworthy receivers, I know not who are. This may be an *unwelcome* truth, but it is an *important* truth, and what you should be made acquainted with; and therefore, my brethren, ask yourselves the question: Have you not received unworthily? I speak not this to discourage any from receiving, far from it; I would have all come to the feet of Jesus in this ordinance, but then I would have them come with a just sense of their own unworthiness: I would advise no one to go there with any arrogance or

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conceit; I would have no one value himself upon his observance of this ordinance, and think to merit heaven by it; I would have him go as a beggar, sensible of his want, and desirous of mercy. God give you all this disposition of mind whenever you approach his holy table!

To proceed. Having set before us the parts of which the sacrament is composed, our catechism then proceeds to acquaint us with the benefits arising from a worthy participation of this holy sacrament. The catechumen is asked, *What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?* To which he answers, *The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.* These are the benefits of worthily receiving the Lord's supper. The believer in this sacrament receives the body and blood of Christ; and, in consequence of this, spiritual life and strength is derived to his soul, as animal life and health is imparted to the body by outward food. The body and blood of Christ are the food of the soul: may every one here present be fed with that wholesome food.

And here again, you may apply this to yourselves. If, in answer to the former questions, you say you have received the body and blood of Christ, I would ask, are your souls strengthened and refreshed? Do you perceive spiritual life and growth in your hearts? If you do not perceive this, you may be assured you have it not: you know if your  
bodies,

bodies, after being for some time weak and languid, are refreshed and restored to their former vigour by a supply of food, or any other means, you must be sensible of it; you must know it, you must experience a difference between a state of weakness and a state of strength. Just so it is with the soul; if your souls have been faint and languid, and have afterwards been comforted and refreshed with the presence of the Redeemer, you must know when a change is made there: If, in short, your souls are strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ, you must be sensible of it; and, if you are not sensible of it, they are not strengthened nor refreshed. O, my brethren, beg of God to make you partakers of the spiritual blessings promised to all worthy receivers of this ordinance?

Having shewn us the design, the nature, and the benefits of the Lord's supper, the last thing our excellent and truly christian catechism informs us of is, the preparation required in all who would come to this holy ordinance. The catechumen is asked, *What is required of them who come to the Lord's supper?* To which it is answered, *To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and to be in charity with all men.* These are required of all those who would come to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; they are

are to examine themselves. *But let a man examine himself, saith the Apostle, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. Examine yourselves* whether you have any pride left in your hearts, whether you think you can merit salvation, whether you can come as lost undone sinners, *whether ye truly repent of your former sins*, whether you have faith, thanksgiving, and charity. Not that I would insinuate that sinners are to stay till they have these graces complete before they approach the Lord's table. Examine themselves, and see if they have them, they must: if they have them not, they must beg of God to endue them with his spirit, and to fill them with these graces: if they have them but in an imperfect degree, and come humbly for assistance, God has promised to supply them, and to increase their store. But the first thing required let them carefully attend to: they must *examine truly whether they repent them truly of all their former sins*. Therefore, my brethren, whenever you approach the Lord's table, beseech him to give you unfeigned repentance. Repentance towards God you must have. If you are desirous of mercy, you will certainly repent of, and be sorry for, those sins which have separated between you and your God; you will resolve and earnestly desire, by his grace and spirit, to lead a new life; you will detest and abhor your former impurities, and long to live the life of faith. If you are desirous of mercy, when you approach the  
Lord's



Lord's table, this will be your frame of mind; and if you are not desirous of mercy, I am sure you have no business there.

The next point concerning which you are to examine yourselves is, *whether you have faith*; not merely a belief in God, or that the scriptures are of divine original, (the devils believe this) but whether you have a *faith in God's mercy through Christ*; whether you believe that God is able and willing to pardon you through the blood of the Mediator. If you have not this faith, beg of God to cloath you with it, wait humbly on him for it; though ye cannot receive the body and blood of Christ, the inward spiritual grace, yet wait humbly (in the use of the outward ordinance) desiring to receive it, and he has promised to hear you. Beg of God moreover to make your faith a lively faith, a vital principle within you, leading you into all holiness of heart and life; above all, quickening you to a love of your Redeemer, which is the next thing required, viz. *a thankful remembrance of his death*. Do not think of purchasing heaven by your own works, but examine yourselves whether you can gratefully call to mind the love of Jesus in laying down his life for your sakes; whether you are truly thankful to your Redeemer, for this sacrifice of himself; and whether, in consequence of this love to your Redeemer, you possess a spirit of love to your brethren; or, in the words of our catechism, whether you *be in charity with all men*; whether

whether you love and desire to promote the happiness of all; whether you can forgive all who have injured you, as you desire *God for Christ's sake should forgive you*. If you have these requisites, give praise unto God, for it is not to yourselves, but to his Holy Spirit you are indebted for these great gifts and graces: if you have them not, beg of him to cloath you with them. Only come to the Lord Jesus with true sorrow for sin, and he will complete his own work, *he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*. Be not afraid, my brethren, of coming to this table, for the Lord Jesus is a loving Redeemer, and reaches out his hand to every trembling soul that approaches him. Come with a desire of mercy, and he will make you welcome guests.

Thus, after various interruptions, have I at last been able to finish an exposition of the catechism; and, I trust, I have advanced nothing throughout these sermons but what may be fully proved from the authority of the bible, and our own church. However, if any persons have any objections to make against what I have offered, as I intend to put them in print, they will have an opportunity of enforcing these objections; to which, if proposed in the spirit of meekness, they may depend on a candid answer.

A word or two to my own parishioners, and I have done. My dearly beloved brethren, I have endeavoured, as well as I have been able, to explain



plain to you the great doctrines of the gospel, as contained in that truly christian system, our church catechism. This, as minister of your parish, is a debt I owed you. Our church, indeed, requires, that her ministers should catechise and instruct the youth of their respective parishes every Lord's day in the afternoon, but the constitution of this parish requiring *two preaching ministers*, renders this impracticable: but as this is a duty you all owe your respective families, permit me to press it strongly upon you. You will certainly be accountable to God for every soul committed to your care. Let me then entreat you, for your own sakes, as well as theirs, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: do not spend all your time and care in furnishing them with worldly wisdom, (which, God knows, they will soon learn) and at the same time leave their minds uncultivated. I am sensible it is my duty, as your minister, go from house to house, and minister to the spiritual improvement of those who are committed to my charge. This too, in so large a parish as this, (where there is so much other duty) is in a manner impossible. To remedy this inconvenience I have one method to propose, and it is this:

You who are desirous of having your children instructed in the things of God, are welcome to send them to me. I hope you will not be displeased with the proposal, as my meaning is honest,



nest, and as I earnestly wish even your and their salvation. God knows my prayers for you are, that I may meet you all with joy at God's awful tribunal. I will therefore set apart an hour every *Saturday* in the afternoon, (for that I take to be the most convenient time, as your children are then absent from school) in order to instruct them, as well as I am able, in the great truths of Christ's religion.

To conclude. You have seen, my brethren, that God has been graciously pleased to make fresh offers of mercy to his fallen creatures; he has promised to give them eternal life. The things which are requisite to be wrought in us are, repentance, or turning to God, a faith in God through Christ, and a holy life in consequence of this faith. To assist us herein, he has promised us the guidance of his Holy Spirit, which we are to ask by diligent prayer, and wait for in the use of the means he has appointed, *viz.* the blessed sacraments. May the eternal God send these things home to all your hearts! You who desire it will, I hope, join your hearts with mine in solemn prayer to God.

O great and glorious Lord God, blessed be thy holy name for giving fresh offers of mercy to thy rebellious creatures through the blood of thy Son; incline our hearts to accept thereof, remove from us all prejudice against thy holy word, and enable us to turn unto thee by sincere repentance. Give us, O Lord, a saving faith in Christ Jesus our Redeemer,

deemer, and let thy spirit enable us to manifest our faith in our lives and conversations. Teach us to pray unto thee for thy grace, that we may adorn the doctrine of our Saviour in all things. Send forth, O God, the spirit of thy Son into our hearts, that we may enter into spiritual communion with him. Grant this, O merciful Lord, not for our worthiness, but for the alone merits of Christ Jesus our Redeemer: to whom with thee O Father, and thee O Holy Ghost, three persons but one eternal God, be ascribed (as is most justly due) the whole honour and glory of man's redemption, now, henceforth, and for evermore. *Amen.*

*Repent-*

*Repentance and Reconciliation with God  
recommended and enforced :*

IN TWO  
S E R M O N S,

PREACHED at the  
PARISH-CHURCH  
O F

St. Saviour, Southwark ;

On SUNDAY, *February* the 1<sup>st</sup>. And on  
FRIDAY the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1756. Being the Day  
appointed, by his MAJESTY's Proclama-  
tion, to be observed as a General FAST.

WITH  
A serious and affectionate ADDRESS to the  
Inhabitants of the said Parish.

THE SIXTH EDITION.



The following and Recommendation of the  
The following and Recommendation of the

IN F W O

S E R M O N S



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TO  
The Parishioners of St. Saviour,  
SOUTHWARK.

*My dearly beloved Brethren,*

**P**ERMIT me to address myself to you in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Suffer me to recommend the following sermons to your serious and attentive perusal. — They were delivered on the most important occasion that, perhaps, was ever known, and I am willing to hope, from the numerous congregation (on the fast-day especially) that they have been made useful to some souls. As the eternal God seems to be alarming a guilty world by his tremendous judgments, it becomes every minister of the gospel to improve the awful opportunity that now presents itself, by inviting sinners to accept of mercy at the hands of our dear Redeemer.

This, I thought, was incumbent on *me*: and for this reason I publish from the press what I delivered from the pulpit, with a sincere desire, that they may be the means of

awakening some carnal minds to an earnest solicitude about soul-concerns. God often works by the meanest instruments, and, I trust, he will speak even by me: but at the same time that I desire to be made more extensively useful to mankind, I am sensible I ought not to forget those, among whom the providence of God has placed me. To you, therefore, in particular, I now address myself; for, of you, in particular, I must give an account at God's tremendous bar. Bear with me then, my brethren, while I call upon you, in the name of God, to attend to the things which belong unto your eternal peace. I must inform you, that unless you have an experimental acquaintance with the Lord Jesus in your souls, good would it have been for you had you never been born.—This is what I have often inculcated in almost all my discourses; and this, I am not to be informed, has given many of you great offence. As many of you are prejudiced against me, merely for preaching Jesus Christ, and him crucified; it may not be improper to expostulate with you on the subject. Let me desire you would give a candid and impartial hearing to what I have



have to say in my defence: and may the Spirit of God remove all prejudice, and enable you to determine agreeably to the truth, as it is in Jesus.

I have thought it my duty (as a minister of the church of *England*) to preach no other doctrines among you than those of that church. For this reason I was determined, by the grace of God, not to flatter, nor suffer you to slumber in your carnal security, but constantly set before you the misery of man in a state of nature. I have endeavoured to convince you, that man is a fallen creature; that his nature is depraved and corrupt; that no works of his own can recommend him to the love and favour of God; that man must come to God *as a sinner*, and be justified by the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, applied to his soul by faith only; that he cannot take a single step in the divine life without the Almighty influence and assistance of the blessed Spirit of God. I have, moreover, informed you, that unless you are made sensible of your miserable state by nature, unless you experience the pardoning love of God upon your souls on this side the grave, *i. e.*

unless you are born again of the Spirit of God, nothing can save you from the damnation of hell.

These are the doctrines I preach; and by these doctrines I have given many of you great offence: but why? Are they not the doctrines of the gospel? Are they not the doctrines of the church of *England*? Too many of our clergy know they are; and for that reason, in their disputes on these points, they very artfully evade every argument that is produced from her authority. Several of them oppose these great and important truths; the doctrine of justification by Jesus Christ alone contradicts their pride, and they oppose with all their strength what they have solemnly engaged in the presence of God to support and defend: the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ are not affected by what I now say, and therefore will not be offended. The others may think as they please; I have nothing to hope from their esteem, and (blessed be God) I have nothing to fear from their malice. I must therefore assert, and am ready to prove, that too many of our clergy, by their impious opposition to what they (I hope

hope ignorantly) called the NEW DOCTRINE, are the avowed enemies of the church of *England*. I pray God they may see their danger before it be too late, lest they find, hereafter, they have been fighting against God.

I speak not this out of any disrespect to their persons: God forbid! I am sorry at my heart, to find they afford so great occasion. I would not indeed have mentioned this, had there not been an absolute necessity for it. Several of the clergy endeavour to prejudice the minds of our people against receiving the great truths of the gospel. It is therefore absolutely necessary that our people should be exhorted, no longer to trust such blind guides.

—Since these things are so, let me advise you, my brethren, to pin your faith on no man's sleeve, but to search the scriptures, and examine for yourselves. I do not desire you to rest on my authority, no more than on that of others. I desire to stand or fall by the oracles of God. By this rule I am ready to be tried; if you will but attend to these sacred pages with an humble desire of information, I am sensible you *must* agree to the doc-



trines I advance. Another favour I would ask, and it is this; purchase the homilies of our church: they contain many excellent and christian truths, and highly deserve your serious perusal. The doctrines contained in these glorious treatises, I, and every clergyman have promised to preach and defend. To them I refer myself, and defy the bitterest opposer of the gospel to produce any argument from them that can invalidate the gospel of Christ, which *some Men* distinguish by the name of a NEW DOCTRINE. But, my brethren, it is no *new Doctrine*. It is the *old* doctrine of the gospel: it is the doctrine of the primitive fathers, and the doctrine of the church of *England*, as contained in her articles, homilies, and liturgy. This being the case, I leave you to judge to whom the charge of innovation properly belongs. I only desire a fair and impartial examination. Be not imposed on by the subtilty or the malice of men, but ask them, whether these very doctrines are not the doctrines of the church of *England*? Only ask them the question, and they must be blind indeed (or something worse) if they deny it. Let me intreat you,  
my

my brethren, to judge for yourselves. Try every thing by the rule of God's word. Abide by the determination of your own church, and I am content. Do not, however, put the consideration of these points from you; for, believe me, my dear brethren, an eternity depends upon it. Resolve then to look up to God for the aid and assistance of his Holy Spirit, beseech him to guide you into all truth. Think me not *your enemy because I tell you the truth*. You may be assured I would not willingly give you the least offence. I can safely appeal to the great searcher of hearts, that my only aim is to deliver my own soul, and to deal out a blessing unto you. I hope you will attend to what has been said, and see for yourselves whether these things are so.

Nothing but a real desire to minister to your salvation has induced me to address you: for God knows *my heart's desire for you is, that you may be saved, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved*. Now brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace in Jesus Christ our Redeemer. This grace, I hope, you will be experimen-  
tally

tally acquainted with. I hope we shall shortly meet in those regions of bliss and glory, where all contentions shall cease, where all animosity shall vanish, and where the love of Jesus will be the only subject of our praise and admiration. That you may be so united to him here as thus to reign with him hereafter, is the sincere and earnest endeavour, seconded by the fervent and hearty prayers of,

*My dear brethren,*

*Your affectionate, tho' unworthy minister,*

Feb. 14, 1756.

T. JONES.



# S E R M O N

## O N

JAMES iv. 9 10.

*Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter  
be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.  
Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and  
he shall lift you up.*

**T**HIS is the advice the Apostle gives those to whom he wrote this epistle, in order to deprecate the judgments of God that were hanging over their heads. As the cause of all signal and national punishments is the iniquity of mankind, we are advised to humble ourselves under a just sense of that iniquity, that the anger of the Lord may be turned away from us. He tells us in the first verse of this chapter, that wars and fightings, as well as all other grievous calamities, proceed from those lusts that war in our members; and it certainly follows, that if we would be freed from the effect, we must remove the cause: and we are told in the text, that the only way to remove both cause and effect, is to humble ourselves before God, by way of repentance, for the cause, and by way of deprecation of the effect:

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fect: in consequence of this humiliation we shall be lifted up from that deplorable state into which we have fallen, and shall be exalted to the love and favour of God: this is the substance of the text—*Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

In my following discourse, I propose, with the divine assistance, to shew,

1st. The great reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before Almighty God;—*be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

2dly. Wherein this affliction and humiliation may be said to consist;—*let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness.*

3dly. The happy effects of thus turning to God;—*humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.* And may the good Spirit of God dispense his gracious influences to every soul here present, and give you the hearing ear, and the understanding heart, while I am endeavouring to shew the great reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before Almighty God;—*be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

I design this discourse to prepare myself and you, in the best manner I am able, for a suitable observance of the approaching fast. This, I hope, will induce you to give a candid hearing to what I have to offer upon the subject before me.

Under



Under the first head, that we may the more easily perceive the reason we have to repent and turn to the Lord, we may consider ourselves as members of society, or as individuals. And first, as members of society, as parts of one whole, and as interested and connected in one frame or body politic. If we survey the infidelity in principle, and the dissoluteness in practice, of the people of this land, we cannot but own that we have abundant reason to implore the divine mercy and forgiveness. Our guilt (as a people) rises in proportion to the blessings we receive at the hand of heaven. That this nation has been peculiarly favoured with the blessings of providence is a real fact; the temperature of our climate, and the plenty which distinguish this island, are too notorious to be denied. Add to this that remarkable instance of God's goodness in indulging us with so great a plenty of the gospel of Christ: we enjoy the christian religion in its primitive purity, and can call upon our Redeemer in those ways we see laid down in his holy word. And this is another very eminent advantage we of these kingdoms enjoy. — While many other nations are obliged to depend on the traditions of men, while they are debarred the use of the scriptures, or at least have them put into their hands, mangled and defaced by their crafty designing teachers, it is our privilege and happiness to have free access to the fountain of knowledge, the lively oracles of God, which,



which, by the grace of his Holy Spirit, are able to make us wise unto salvation; while our persecuted brethren abroad are obliged to retire into holes and corners, that they may have an opportunity of hearing the word of God, and joining in religious worship, we of this nation are not only permitted the free use and exercise of religious duties, but are invited to call upon God, and attend upon his holy worship. What would the poor protestants in *France* give for that liberty and indulgence we of this nation are born to?

Again, while they are the slaves of tyrants, and the dupes of arbitrary power, it is our happiness to breathe a freer and a purer air in the more mild regions of liberty and plenty. Liberty is the inheritance of the natives of this land, and the government thereof is entirely calculated to preserve and support, not to undermine and destroy it.

From all these, and many more particulars that might be mentioned, we may well conclude, that we are held under the strictest ties of gratitude to Almighty God (as a people) for the many spiritual privileges and temporal blessings he has showered down upon our heads.—Let us now recollect what return we have made our wise and good benefactor for these great and signal advantages we enjoy.

And, first, with regard to the climate and the plenty of every necessary our island produces; so far from being thankful (you will remember that

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I am now speaking of ourselves collectively as a people) so far from being thankful for these gifts of providence, that we are constantly murmuring and repining; the commodities of our own country are despised, and nothing but what is foreign will (generally speaking) go down. Our own manufactures, and the artists concerned in them, are disregarded as useless and insignificant, while the most beggarly trash, provided it comes from a foreign land, is wished for and purchased at the dearest rate. Our own artificers (the staple of *English* wealth) are neglected, and a set of things introduced in their room, whose only merit consists in rendering it a matter of difficulty to determine, whether they are men or monkeys: this is our gratitude for the gifts and blessings of Providence. But as this is an evil of a moral, at least of a political nature, it does not come under my inspection. I therefore only mention it, and pass on to those general instances of ingratitude, whereon it is more immediately my province to descant and enlarge.

What returns have we made our gracious God for that free use of his holy word he has indulged us with? We have the lively oracles of God in our hands; *many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which we see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which we hear, and have not heard them.* Now, do we (I mean as a people) prize this inestimable jewel, these valuable records?

cords? Do we esteem this book of God, as a pearl of great price? And do we implore the Spirit of God to remove the veil from our hearts, that we may understand what we read? I fear (generally speaking) we do not. To what but to a neglect of God's revealed will, and a contempt of the offers of grace which are daily made us, to what causes but these can we possibly ascribe that general infidelity which is the characteristic of this age? The word of God is treated by numbers with the greatest contempt. That word of truth which, when understood, is able to make men wise unto salvation, is looked on by many as an old wive's fable. I am far from charging this upon the whole nation: but that it is the prevailing custom, with a great number, is too plain to need a proof.

Fashion takes the lead in high life more particularly. Our men of wit and spirit scorn to be tied down to the same rules with the mean and vulgar. They must gratify every sensual appetite that rises in them; and therefore think it the most effectual method to remove the bible (that bar to their pleasures) by pronouncing it spurious, ridiculous, and the contrivance of priests.

Thus, they reject the word of God against themselves, and go on indulging every filthy lust, despising the commandments of *JEHOVAH*, and *needing none of his reproofs.*



As this is the character of many, so the practical part of it will suit too many of those who profess a mighty respect and veneration for the scriptures; for among the number that join in confessing those writings to be of divine inspiration, how few are there that are really thankful for this precious gift, and shew that thankfulness by a diligent and constant use of them? The generality of us enhance our guilt by owning the scriptures to be of divine authority, when, at the same time, we pay no regard to the loud and solemn calls to repentance given us therein; when we despise that Redeemer of whom they treat, and count his blood, wherewith alone we can be sanctified, an unholy or common thing. We are as dissolute in our lives, as indulgent to our lusts, and as much kept under by their power, as if there were no restraints for them in the bible. We are practical infidels certainly. For, we are as regardless of religion as if there were no scriptures, as indifferent about eternal happiness, as if there were neither heaven nor hell, and as hardened in sin as if there were no God, —while our foreign brethren mourn their loss of the fountain of all knowledge, we spurn it from us. We are like the disobedient *Jews*; we loath the manna, and are surfeited with it; we hew to ourselves broken cisterns; we have a fountain of living water to go to, and prefer the bread of idleness, of wickedness, debauchery, and impiety to that bread which came down from heaven.

Again, are we truly thankful for the glorious privilege we of this nation enjoy ; I mean the full and free use of our religion ? How do our suffering brethren abroad long for the opportunities we are so happy as to enjoy ? How would they flock to hear the word of eternal life, and wait, and hang upon the preacher's lips ? Whereas we (you remember I am not aiming at any particular person, but speaking of ourselves as a people) are cold and indifferent, lifeless and inactive. Many of us neglect assembling ourselves together ; and others, when they repair to the temple of God, are so remiss, so unconcerned while they are there as if eternal salvation were a matter of indifference. Others, again, make a merit of their attendance, and of their weak performances ; and a great part reject the merits of a crucified Saviour with scorn.

This is but a faint sketch of the infidelity and profaneness now prevailing. You will all, I believe, very readily allow, that this age and nation are now wicked to a proverb. Infidelity has tainted the principles, vice and wickedness are become the practice of the generality of the people of this land. This then surely calls upon us to humble ourselves before God ; since practices of this nature will most assuredly draw down the divine vengeance. Nations and kingdoms, as such, must be punished in this world, because hereafter all those relations and dependencies, whereby one

member

member of society is connected with the rest, will then cease, and be no more. Rewards or punishments will be dispensed hereafter to men, as individuals, according as they have embraced or rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ. But all bodies and societies of men must be punished, considered in a collective capacity, in this world. As this is necessary from the nature of things, so this has been the constant method of God's dealings with mankind. Whenever a nation or people have filled up the measure of their iniquity, God fails not to vindicate his injured honour upon them, and to warn others by their example. These have been his dealings with the great empires and monarchies we read of in history, which are now no more. This was the method he took with his own peculiar people, and this is what we of this land have all the reason in the world to expect.

I need make no scruple to assert, that this nation has well nigh filled up the measure of its iniquities, and we have all the reason in the world to humble ourselves before God, in order to avert those heavy judgments our manifold sins have deserved. Especially when we recollect we have had warning given us, and that the judgments of the great and terrible God, are now abroad in the earth.

The late dreadful calamities that have happened to other lands, call to us in more than the loud-



ness of thunder, Awake thou sleeping land of *Britain*, and call upon thy God, that thy whole people perish not.—And this points out to us another advantage we enjoy, and another instance of our ingratitude. The advantage is God's mercifully sparing us hitherto, while he is chastising the rest of the earth. Our sins cry as loud, perhaps, louder, for vengeance than theirs, who have (many of them) been cut off in the midst of their sins. Hitherto God has waited to be gracious. We have had some slight experience of the shocks that have been lately disturbing the whole globe, but hitherto remain in safety. Our ingratitude (as a people) is very evident, since we are not (or at least do not shew that we are) thankful for the goodness and forbearance of God. How are we affected by the late earthquakes? Have they awakened any of us? Have they induced us to turn unto God? Or are we a whit the more serious than before? General observation confirms that we are not. Those who call them judgments of God are ridiculed. Natural causes are sought out to account for them, though (by the way) no natural cause has nor can be assigned for the late unparalleled shock the whole globe has felt, except that great natural cause sin and wickedness. Sin is the cause of earthquakes, and therefore we of this land have great cause to tremble. But the late dreadful events are almost forgotten and out of mind: the Most High hath uttered his  
voice,

voice, yet none considereth nor layeth it to heart. We are (I am generally speaking) like a set of gentlemen who lately came from *Lisbon*, and who, one would imagine, must have had the most awful impressions made upon their minds. These persons landed at *Falmouth* just as the bell was ringing for prayers, and it was naturally expected they would have embraced the first opportunity of returning thanks to God for their late happy escape: but instead of this, they went to a tavern, sent for whores, and a couple of fidlers, and spent their night in riot and debauchery. This I had from undoubted authority.

We see by this how little these men were affected by the hand of God, which was so lately upon them. As little affected are we. Few (if any) awakenings have been heard of among us in consequence of it: we are quite hardened in sin, even to a degree of stupidity. Public diversions, those instruments in the devil's hand, where no real disciple of Jesus Christ will dare be present; those places are constantly frequented, and the worship of God slighted and neglected; and *shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord?* As we are unmoved at what has befallen others, we have all the reason in the world to believe that our destruction lingereth not, but that some heavy punishment hangs over our heads. In what way or manner God may be pleased to chastise this guilty land, he only knows.

If we are not swallowed up by an earthquake, (and why may not the earth open her mouth this moment upon us? It is no more than what has happened to others) I say, if we are not swallowed up, &c. yet we may remember the Lord's hand is not shortened; that he has various judgments whereby to execute his vengeance upon a guilty land. We are in all probability on the eve of the bloodiest war that *England* ever knew! who knows but we may fall by the sword? That the winds and the waves may be made to fight against us, and we be delivered up into the hands of our popish enemies? And in such a case the consequences are well known. However in what manner soever the Lord shall be pleased to avenge himself upon us, some punishment we have the greatest reason to expect. Certainly then it will highly become us to humble ourselves before God, to confess our sins and provocations against him, and to implore his mercy for his dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. As it is thus necessary for us to deprecate the divine displeasure (as a people) it is equally so as we are individuals. Every one of us, in our private capacity, has abundant reason to humble himself before God, for besides those heavy judgments, which now surround us, besides the many tokens of God's displeasure which are now abroad in the earth, there is one judgment-seat where we must all appear; and unless we are reconciled to God by faith



faith in Jesus Christ, while we live, nothing can save us from everlasting destruction.

This is certain ; and therefore every soul here present that has never seen its corruption by nature, its enmity to God, and its state of pollution, and guilt ; every soul that is not brought home to God by the blood of Christ, is in danger of eternal destruction. And surely every one that is in danger of eternal misery has abundant reason to humble himself before God, and implore his mercy.

I shall not enlarge on this subject at present, because a convenient opportunity will be afforded me on the fast-day. I would only observe at present, that the best of us must own ourselves to be vile and miserable sinners ; that we are under the power of sin, and are held captives by our lusts and evil inclinations. Therefore, whoever thou art, O man, whoever thou art, O woman, that art in thy natural state (conscience do thine office while I am speaking, and convince the sinner of his vileness and wretchedness) whoever thou art, that are not prepared if God should call thee this moment, humble thyself before him, and beg of him to be reconciled unto thee for the sake of thy blessed Redeemer. Indeed thou hast abundant reason. For while thou art in a state of nature, thou art in a state of enmity against God ; and how dreadful must his situation be who has the eternal JEHOVAH for his foe ?

I hope, by this time, I have convinced you what abundant reason we all have thus to humble ourselves before God ;—*be afflicted, and mourn, and weep.*

I am to shew in the second place, wherein this humiliation consists :—*let your laughter be turned to heaviness, and your joy to mourning.*

Now, this humiliation consists in a real and unfeigned sorrow for our sins and offences, and in earnest prayer and supplication to God for mercy : if we are really convinced of our misery by nature, if we are really sensible how grossly we have offended our holy God by actual transgression, we shall be afflicted for so doing : we shall mourn over our unhappy state, we shall weep before him and entreat his forgiveness. This humility consists in real self-abasement : in being divested of every proud thought, and every arrogant conceit of ourselves : in laying low before the throne of God, owning our vileness, acknowledging ourselves to be less than the least of all his mereies. If we are truly humbled, we shall not rest till peace is spoken to us from God : we shall be alarmed at our danger, and groan earnestly for deliverance.—*our laughter will be turned into mourning* ; all that profane wit and ridicule of holy things we before allowed ourselves in, will now cut us to the heart. And we shall mourn over our ingratitude and rebellion to our blessed Redeemer : all that mirth and gaitv we before delighted

lighted in, will now appear flat and insipid; none but the crucified Jesus can now speak comfort to us, and the language of our souls will be,

None but Christ to me be given,  
None but Christ in earth or heaven.

The fast which the Lord will chuse, is a real sorrow of the heart, expressing itself in the outward acts of mortification and self-denial, and, indeed, that soul that is in anguish for sin, will of course mortify the body, and bring it into subjection.

Again, true sorrow for sin will be attended with a desire, at least to forsake it. If we fall, it will be really grievous, and matter of affliction to us. —It is not outward form and ceremony; it is not praying with our lips will reconcile us to God, unless our hearts accompany our tongues, and cry for mercy. You then who purpose to observe the approaching fast, will do well to remember, that your bare presence here will be of no avail. Your joining in the outward form, and making a mere shew of humility, will only increase your guilt, unless ye desire your hearts should be afflicted. Beg of God to prepare you to humble yourselves before him, by setting home his law on your consciences, by convincing you of your sinfulness and danger, and by giving you a true humility and sorrow of heart: *then shall ye cry, and the Lord*



*shall answer: then shall ye call unto him, and he will say, Behold, here I am.* And this brings us in the last place to consider, the happy effects of thus turning to God:—*humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.*

Humility is the gate of honour: whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted. He that is convinced of his own weakness and inability, and cries to the Lord Jesus for mercy, shall certainly find acceptance: he is thus wounded in order to be healed: the Lord delighteth to save the humble soul, and to relieve those that are of a contrite heart: those that are humbled under a sense of sin, the Lord will lift up to grace here, and glory hereafter. Beg of God, my brethren, to give you a true and hearty repentance. Beseech him to prepare your hearts against the approaching solemnity, and I can promise you, in my master's name, that if you are really afflicted, and call upon him from the bottom of your hearts, ye *shall* find rest and peace unto your souls. Beseech him at the same time to enlarge your hearts and affections, that ye may remember your countrymen as well as yourselves: and beg of him to be merciful, and spare this guilty land. I invite you in the name of God to humble yourselves:—*be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, &c.*

I shall make no farther application; but shall reserve it to the day itself. I only inform you that I intend, God willing, to preach here twice on the  
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the approaching fast : many servants, and others, cannot attend in the beginning of the day : they will therefore have an opportunity of attending in the afternoon : and I hope you will send your servants and dependants, that they may join in this act of humiliation, all orders and degrees of men are threatened by the late dreadful calamities ; therefore all orders and degrees of men ought to humble themselves before God. As the judgments around us have been very extraordinary, I hope our humiliation will be extraordinary likewise.

May God prepare us all, according to the preparation of the sanctuary, and may it prove such a fast as he hath chosen.

## SERMON

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## S E R M O N

O N

MATTHEW V. 25, 26.

*Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

**I** Hope, my brethren, we have all offered up our prayers to God with earnestness and sincerity; and that we have desired at least, to humble ourselves before him. I trust many a fervent ejaculation has reached the throne of grace. I trust there have been many wrestling *Jacobs* to-day, God grant they may prove prevailing *Israels*! As you have addressed your Redeemer in prayer, I hope you are disposed to give a candid and diligent attention to what I have to offer from those words of his I have just now read to you. They are part of the most divine sermon that was ever delivered: they were spoken by the greatest preacher that ever appeared



appeared on earth: they are the words of our blessed Redeemer himself; which, when rightly understood, he has elsewhere told us, *are spirit and life*. God grant they may be spirit and life both to you and me.

In this sermon he opens and explains the spirituality of the law; assures us that a just God will by no means accept of a partial obedience, and that nothing short of a perfect service will be pleasing to a perfect God.

If we attend to the strictness and spirituality of the law (as explained by our Lord) we cannot but see how grossly we have violated it; and that no man living (the man Christ Jesus excepted) was ever able to perform it; for, according to this explanation, the most high God *requireth truth in the inward parts*: his law extends to our inmost thoughts, and justly condemns the least irregularity of them. This being the case, we cannot but own the necessity of our being clothed with a better righteousness than our own, if ever we would be partakers of the kingdom of heaven. To induce us to apply for this royal robe is our Lord's design in the words of the text: for after having proved us all guilty before God (which he has done, by giving us the spiritual meaning of it, and proposing it with such rigour, and requiring an observance of it to such a degree of exactness, as I am sure no man ever arrived at:) I say, having proved us all guilty before God of a violation  
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of his law, he then advises us what we are to do, in the words of the text, *Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him, lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

In discoursing farther on which words, I propose (God willing) to observe the following method.

1st. I shall endeavour to shew you who is meant by the *adversary* here spoken of:—*agree with thine Adversary.*

2dly. In what manner and at what time, we are to agree with him:—*agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him.*

3dly. Who is meant by the judge:—*lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the Judge.* And

4thly, I shall inform you who the officer is, here spoken of, and the consequence of being given into his power:—*and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

Each of which I shall endeavour to apply as I go along: and may the good spirit of God breathe into all our souls the true breath of life, and enable

able you look up to him for a blessing, while I endeavour, in the first place, to shew you who is meant by the *adversary* here spoken of:—*agree with thine Adversary.*

Now, this adversary is the eternal God. Every man, by nature, is an enemy to him. We read in scripture, that *God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, that no evil dwells with him, and that without holiness no man shall see him.* Now we are evil from the womb, God himself hath declared, that *the thoughts of man's heart are only evil continually.* The sacred writings inform us, that *we are all gone out of the way; that we are altogether become abominable; that there is none righteous, no not one:* consequently without agreeing with this adversary, we shall never enjoy his heavenly bliss. We brought this enmity to God into the world with us; for *we are all, by nature, born in sin:* our natures are corrupted, and we have no power of ourselves to serve and please God. As the scriptures assure us of this, our hearts (if we examine them) will convince us of it. We may have indeed some specious qualities in our dispositions that may appear amiable in the eyes of men like ourselves, but in the sight of infinite purity, we sink into nothing, and are corrupt before him. Every one of us is in this situation by nature, and nothing but an almighty arm can raise us out of it. The first man indeed was created in the image of God; but that image was defaced by his fall: in the day  
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he eat of the forbidden fruit he died to God ; he died to the divine life ; he died to all spiritual grace and power. This spiritual death he entailed on his posterity. We partake of his evil nature, and are dead to God. We have no natural ability to turn to him : *we are all by nature the children of wrath : we are dead in trespasses and sins.* To what but original corruption can we possibly ascribe that coldness and inattention to spiritual things, that aversion to God and goodness, which every one of us must perceive to be more or less in all our hearts ? Hence the diseased persons we read of in the gospel are emblems of the spiritual maladies of our souls. In the man that was born blind, we have an image of our spiritual blindness by nature : the eyes of our minds are shut against the light of the gospel : the situation of such is represented by the Apostle as that of men *having the understanding darkened* : the leper full of spots and blemishes was an exact picture of the leprosy of sin, with which our souls by nature are infected, and all their bodily defects are so many images of our depravity and corruption.

Now, against all this sin and pollution, the eternal God is a declared enemy : it cannot consist with the purity of the divine essence to have any communion with persons in this state ; but in this state is every man by nature, and therefore to every man, by nature, *God out of Christ is a consuming fire.* As we are enemies to God by  
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our natural defilement, we have also made him our adversary by actual transgression. We have been ungrateful to this our best benefactor; *we provoke him every day; we have committed iniquity with greediness, and have rushed into sin, like the horse into the battle:* the bold defiance of his laws, the open breach of his commands, the contempt of his gospel, the profaning his holy name, in short, the many acts of impiety, intemperance, lasciviousness, and injustice, now prevailing, loudly proclaim this awful truth; and although some persons may have been preserved from enormous and grievous sins, yet we have all of us the seeds of them in our hearts; and nothing but the divine interposition prevents their sprouting into action. A sense of this made an exemplary christian \* say (when he heard of a criminal who was carrying to execution for some flagrant act) “There goes my wicked self. I have the same root of bitterness in my deceitful heart; and it has been owing to the restraining grace of God alone, that I have been preserved from falling into the same sin.” But in many things the best of us offend often; nor, till our natures are renewed by the spirit of God, can it possibly be otherwise! While the fountain is defiled, the streams that flow from it cannot be clear and untainted.

Some think that God is not their adversary, because they perform some outward ceremonies; but

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\* The holy martyr *Bradford*.

alas, all outward duties, unless they proceed from an inward principle of love to God, are only so many *splendida peccata* (as St. *Austin* terms them) glittering vices, which can never abide the test of infinite justice. Men may skin over the wound sin has made in their souls, by these outward duties, but the blood of Christ alone, applied by faith, can effectually heal it.

Such as imagine God is not their adversary because they pay a regard to certain moral duties, and perform some religious ceremonies, I would ask, do you render an entire obedience to the law of God? The law of God is holy, just, and good; and he requires an exact conformity to it, in thought, word, and deed. A perfect God will have a perfect service: this you must allow: the thing speaks for itself. If you have done this indeed, God is not your adversary; you have no need of a Redeemer. But if you have deviated ever so little from the path of God's commandments (even in thought) your works will profit you nothing; and then every one of us are become guilty before God.

Thus the Apostle argues; *I had not known sin but by the law*: before his conversion he thought himself a very good man: because he was strict in the observance of the outward part of it, and little thought he was a lost sinner. But when he saw the spiritual meaning of the law, when he perceived, that nothing short of an universal obedience to it would



would be admitted by infinite justice, he then saw he had by no means performed it: he then knew sin reigned in his members.

Again, he saith, *When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died*; when I perceived how rigorous the commandment was, the consciousness of sin revived in my soul, and I found myself to be dead in trespasses and sins; and in this spiritual deadness he must have remained, had not the Lord Jesus proclaimed a pardon to his soul.

The substance of the first head then is this: the eternal God is made our adversary by original sin and actual transgression. Every man by nature is at enmity with God. I would therefore ask every soul in this congregation (and may the eternal God enable you to answer aright) Are you in a state of nature, or are you not? Have you felt the weight of sin, and are you sincerely desirous to be freed from it by the blood of Jesus Christ? If so, the spirit of God is at work upon your hearts: the Lord is bringing you out of your natural darkness into his marvellous light. If not, if you have never seen the evil of sin, if you have never mourned over the corruption of your hearts, but on the contrary are thoughtless of eternity, indifferent about salvation, and unconcerned about your souls, you are in a state of nature: nay, though you may perform the outward duties of religion, and appear very exemplary in the sight of men, yet if your hearts are unrenewed by the spirit of God, you

are still in a state of nature ; you are no better than painted sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but within are full of corruption and uncleanness. Your inward man is corrupted, and defiled with sin, however specious your outward deportment may be. Hear this, ye natural men, and tremble ; for, whoever you are, the eternal God is your adversary. Think my brethren, how powerful an enemy you have to deal with : no wealth can bribe, no subtilty can deceive, no strength can overcome him. Remember, while you are at enmity with God, that all nature is at enmity with you : you are under the curse of God : your wealth is often a curse, since it is too frequently the means of hardening you in your sins, and drawing you off from God : and unless you are reconciled to him, the forest of his vengeance will light upon you : and if he should be pleased to make bare his arm upon this guilty land (as he has done in other countries) to whom, to whom, my brethren, can you apply for shelter ? What must be your grief ! How great your horror of soul when you recollect, that these judgments are the instruments of that Being whom you have wantonly made your foe ? That they are sent to hurry you into the regions of despair ?

I fear too many of you, my brethren, however you may flatter yourselves, I fear too many of you are in this dreadful situation, *viz.* in a state of enmity with the Lord of hosts. Good God, how can you be easy ! How can you enjoy one moment's peace,

peace, while this tremendous Being is unappeased? How can you venture to close your eyes to sleep, when you know not but you may open them in everlasting burnings? My dear unhappy brethren you are under the curse of almighty God. And can you then be safe? Can you evade his anger? Can you resist omnipotence? O no; the nations of the world, compared to him, are no more than *a drop of the bucket*. This may be an unpleasing truth, but truth it is; and unless your hearts are renewed by God's Holy Spirit (if God be true) He is to you a consuming fire.

Be not offended, my brethren, because I tell you the truth: what would you think of that sentinel, who should neglect to give notice of the enemy's approach? The severest punishment would be his due; and the same should I deserve, if I neglected to tell you of your danger; especially on such a day as this, which is set apart for a day of solemn humiliation: and what means so likely to cause you to humble yourselves before God, as by convincing you of the danger you are in? What season so proper as the present, when we have all the reason in the world to expect some signal instances of the divine displeasure? However, all I can say is but a dead letter, unless the spirit of God be pleased to animate it, and carry it home to your hearts. May he therefore open the eyes of your minds, that you may see your danger. May he dispose your hearts to apply to the means of



reconciliation with your almighty foe, while I endeavour, in the second place, to shew in what manner, and at what time, we are to agree with him: *agree with thine adversary quickly whilst thou art in the way with him.*

Now some people think of agreeing with this adversary by the practice of morality; which, however useful and amiable in its proper place, can by no means answer the end designed; for, as I observed before, as long as the heart is a polluted fountain, the streams that flow from it must necessarily be impure also. If we believe the scriptures, there is only one method of reconciliation with God: *there is no name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Repentance, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are the means of the sinner's reconciliation with God. By bidding us agree with our adversary then, our Lord exhorts us to repent of our sins, and to believe in him. By nature we are sinful and polluted, and have made the eternal God our adversary; and this is the method the Spirit of God observes in reconciling the sinner to this adversary. He first convinces him of sin, by the preaching of the word, or some other way that his infinite wisdom is pleased to direct: the sinner is by these means awakened from the lethargy in which he had been so long lulled; he sees his wretchedness, he mourns over his guilt, and *cries mightily unto God*  
for

for pardon and deliverance; he now sees his utter inability to help himself, and desires to rely on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He is thus wounded in order that he may be healed. The same good Spirit, that has awakened him to a sense of his danger, enables him to see *his help laid on one willing and mighty to save*. He is led to the throne of Jesus, where he finds rest and peace spoken unto his soul. He has the comfortable sense that his sins are pardoned, witnessed to his soul by the Spirit of God. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is the child of God.*

You then, who desire to be reconciled, or to agree with your adversary, have a way opened for you. You, indeed, have forfeited all title to the favour of God, by the violation of his law, but the blessed Jesus has made full satisfaction to his Father's wrath. He has obeyed the law of God in every the most minute particular; and, by virtue of his perfect obedience, shall you be accepted. I now invite you to agree with your adversary, by turning from sin, and believing in the name of Jesus Christ, be humbled under a sense of your own unworthiness, and look up by faith, to the Lord Jesus Christ; or rather beg of God to give you his Holy Spirit, that you may be made acquainted with your own hearts, and desire to be experimentally acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. It is not enough that ye look on him as a redeemer in general, unless

ye can know him to be indeed *your* Saviour; that he died to expiate *your* sins, and to bring pardon and peace to *your* souls. But this is the gift of God. It is not in man to turn himself to God. Implore, then, his Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth, that ye may know what the will of the Lord is. If you turn to God with your whole hearts, you shall be justified from all your sins by faith which is in him. His death shall be thy sacrifice, O sinner, and his obedience shall be thy righteousness. Thou shalt be looked on as perfect in Christ thine head. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* If you ask how you shall be able to know when you have true saving faith in your Redeemer, I answer, your faith is then genuine when it enables you to see your sins pardoned, and is withal a vital principle of holiness within you, reforming your life, and teaching you to practise the duties of the gospel. Defer not then, O sinner! this important work: set about it to-day; for the night cometh wherein no man can work.—And this leads us to examine at what time we are to agree with our adversary: *agree with thine adversary* quickly, WHILEST THOU ART IN THE WAY *with him*. There is no time to be lost; this moment you can hardly call your own; let me exhort you therefore, quickly to be reconciled to your offended God. Sinner, whoever thou art, (and by the term sinner I mean all those that have experienced nothing of the grace of



of God upon their hearts) sinner, whoever thou art, the Almighty God is thine adversary, *agree with him therefore quickly*: lose no time, but embrace the opportunity *whilst thou art in the way with him*. Now thou art in the way with him, because thou art on this side eternity; now is thy time to call on him. Thou hast seen numbers fall beside thee, but as yet thou art spared. Remember a few days will put a period to thy life, and then thou art fixed for ever. When once the curtain of life shall be dropped, then thy doom will be unalterably fixed. Now mercy may be had: now the Lord Jesus Christ waits to be gracious unto thee; he invites thee to be reconciled unto him here, that thou mayst reign with him for ever. When thou comest to lie on thy death-bed, thou wilt see the truth of what I am advancing; but then, perhaps, it may be too late. Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. Again,—Thou art at present in the way with God in the course of his judgments; thousands have fallen victims to his wrath, but thou art spared. But how knowest thou, O man! but his judgments are hastening towards thee? And art thou ready, supposing God should call upon thee by some alarming judgment? If thou art not, resolve to give no sleep to thine eyes, nor suffer the temples of thy head to take any rest, 'till thou hast made a friend of this incensed God. I hope it is with this desire we

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are all assembled here this day! O wrestle with him then, by prayer, intreat him to cast thy sins behind his back, and to wash thy polluted soul in the blood of Jesus. The inhabitants of *Lisbon* as little expected their ruin and desolation, and were as little prepared for it as thou art: and yet, secure and unconcerned as they were, the Lord of hosts made bare his arm upon them, and brought upon them swift destruction. Nor indulge any uncharitable reflection, upon that unhappy people: think not their sins greater than thine; (they had not the word of God as you have) but remember the word of our Redeemer in this day's gospel, *except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*. Insult not over their misfortunes, but be wise by their example. Remember their distress might have been, and may soon be yours. Be not therefore high-minded but fear, lest the same God that spared not them, spare not thee. Perhaps the approaching war may prove our desolation: who knows but God (unless we sincerely turn to him may suffer our popish enemies to triumph over us? Then we shall know the blessing of the protestant religion, by the want of it: then we may learn to prize that word of God we now despise, when we shall be debarred the use of it.

Again, thou art *in the way with* thine adversary, O sinner, at this present time: *thou art in the way with him* in his word. The eternal Lord of angels and men is now in the midst of this congregation;

gation ; he now sees the inmost thoughts of every heart before him : he sees whether you have offered up your prayers unto him with sincerity or not. He sees whether *ye fast for strife and debate*, whether ye are only formal in devotional duties, or whether your hearts are truly humbled. The great God of heaven and earth sees whether you are attending on his word with an humble desire of information, or whether you are secretly opposing and rejecting it. Be humbled then, my brethren, in the presence of that Being, *before whom the angels are not pure in his sight*. This God is now inviting you, by me, to turn, and live : the Lord Jesus Christ invites you, by the word that now addresses you, to come unto him, that you may have life. The dying Jesus calls to you from his cross, not to make his wounds wider by your ingratitude and impiety. Sinner, what art thou doing ? Thrust not thy unhallowed hands into his precious side : he has suffered enough already. See the purple gore streaming from his side, but do not trample upon it, do not join the chief priests in deriding him, but be reconcil'd unto him : pity thine agonizing bleeding God : hear him calling unto you, *Is it nothing unto you, all ye that pass by ? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow*. Now this Saviour waits to be gracious ; he pities thee, O sinner ; he feels more for *thee* than for himself ; he wants to embrace thee : return then, whoever thou art, that



that hast been ungrateful to him ; serve his enemies no longer : I challenge thee for my God, my blessed master wants to cleanse thy polluted soul, and to cloath thee with the robe of his own righteousness. I have spoken to your ears, may the Lord Jesus Christ speak unto all your hearts ; for unless ye obey the call of mercy now, ye must expect to hear the voice of judgment hereafter ; for unless thou agreeest with thine adversary, my brother, thou wilt be assigned over to a just judge.—And this brings me to shew in the third place, who is meant by the judge, *lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge.* This judge is the Lord Jesus Christ himself : he is appointed to be the judge of quick and dead. *God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained, the man Christ Jesus.* Before his tribunal we must all appear : *the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son.* That same Jesus who came into the world, attended by a few poor fishermen, will then appear with legions of angels, and archangels, and all the celestial hosts. He who had not where to lay his head, will then have the kingdom of heaven at his disposal, *to give to whomsoever he will.* He who came meek and lowly into *Jerusalem*, riding on an ass, will then appear in tremendous majesty, riding on the clouds of heaven. His crown of thorns will be exchanged for a crown of glory ; and he will display all the majesty and  
fulness

fulness of the godhead. That Redeemer, whom thou now rejectest with scorn, will then, O sinner, be thine angry judge. Be not therefore, secure and easy ; for although thou may'st escape a temporal punishment, die thou must : die thou must, and appear at the judgment seat of Christ : then every thought of thine heart, will be disclosed ; all the pains thou hast taken to hide thy wickedness and deceit from man will then be too slender a covering. Offended justice will then throw it open, and thou shalt be exposed and confounded before men and angels. Now thou art invited to come to Jesus Christ as a merciful Saviour ; but if thou wilt not hear, if thou art resolved to harden thy heart, remember God will most assuredly bring thee to judgment. Thy Redeemer then may justly say, ungrateful wretch, what canst thou plead in excuse for thyself ? Thou hast crucified me afresh ; thou hast acted my sufferings over again ; thou hast refused the offer of mercy ; now thou hast nothing to expect but the fiery indignation of God, now thou shalt find the wrath of an Almighty God not so trifling as thou hast thought it. Then will that same Jesus, who now pleads with his Father for mercy for returning sinners, then will he plead for justice to his adversaries : then will he deliver them to a most cruel officer. — This leads us to consider, in the last place, who the officer is, that is here spoken of, and the consequence of being delivered into his power :—

*and*

*and the judge deliver thee to the OFFICER, and THOU BE CAST INTO PRISON. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.* This officer is the devil, the grand enemy of souls; with whom hardened and impenitent sinners shall be tormented for ever. He will be the minister of God's eternal vengeance. At the awful tribunal of Christ, all those whose names shall not be found written in the book of life, will then be delivered to this infernal officer, who will cast them out into the prison of death and hell: *verily I say unto thee* (saith our Redeemer) *thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing; i. e. never.* The sinner shall never be freed from the torments of hell till he has satisfied the whole law of God in every particular, which will be impossible. If it cannot be done here, hell is a very improper place to begin it in. The torments of the damned in hell will last as long as eternity itself. Some people indeed will not believe the eternity of hell torments; but then they must not believe the bible: if God be true, hell-torments will endure for ever: *Go ye cursed into everlasting fire,* saith our Saviour, *where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* I allow it is the interest of many to disbelieve this truth; but they ought to remember, that the decrees of God are not to be altered as their fancies shall suggest. Men will not believe this, because they cannot reconcile



it to themselves. I would ask them, how they can reconcile any one of the attributes of God? They may remember, that, "a God all mercy, is a God unjust." But supposing they may not be mistaken, that the torments of the damned may have an end; act they not very absurdly in hazarding their souls upon this issue, because there is a bare possibility that their torments may have an end after an hundred thousand years? Do not imagine, my brethren, that it is in your power to alter the decrees of God: he has denounced eternal torments against all impenitent sinners.—Let this then prevail with you to make the Lord Jesus Christ your friend; for although you may escape here, yet if you die in your present state, eternal vengeance will be sure to overtake you: therefore, if you would avoid the horrid company of the damned in hell; if you would avoid the company of the devil and his angels; if you would not be blaspheming the name of Jesus with the infernal crew; if you would not be banished the presence of God, and be tormented for ever in seas of liquid fire, come humbly to the Lord Jesus Christ, and entreat him to be merciful unto you.

The sum of what has been said is this, the eternal God is an adversary to every man in a state of nature; and every man that is *not born again of the Spirit of God*, is in a state of nature; consequently in a state of enmity with God. To this  
adversary

256 *Repentance and Reconciliation with God*

adversary it is every man's interest to be reconciled, as he would avoid eternal misery. The only way to be thus reconciled, is to turn from sin, and be united to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. This is the work of the Spirit of God, whose assistance I would intreat you to implore. Let me beseech you to call on the Lord Jesus *while he may be found*: for depend upon it, *if you refuse and rebel*, and die without the knowledge of Jesus Christ in your hearts, nothing can save you from the damnation of hell.—At the day of judgment God will not pity you, Jesus will not spare you, hell and satan will have full dominion over you. This is what you must expect. Remember, eternal misery is the consequence of refusing God's gracious call; and if that consideration will not move you nothing will.

My brethren, your souls, your precious souls are at stake; you hang by a very slender thread over the bottomless pit. O call upon God while it is time; harden not your hearts against him. Let what I have said have its due weight. Do not steal your breasts against what I have offered. Do not refuse a blessing at my hands: but come to the Lord Jesus Christ and be at peace with him. Remember, it is not I, but the Lord Jesus Christ himself that speaks: *Agree with thine adversary quickly, &c.*



# S E R M O N

Preached before the

SEVERAL ASSOCIATIONS

OF THE

LAUDABLE ORDER

O F

ANTI-GALLICANS,

A T

The Parish Church of St. BRIDGET,  
(commonly call'd St. BRIDE) LONDON,

On TUESDAY, the 23d of *April*, 1754.  
(Being St. GEORGE's Day.)

THE THIRD EDITION.



T O  
The Right Honourable  
Edward, Lord Viscount Hereford,  
GRAND PRESIDENT;

The Right Honourable  
John, Lord Carpenter,

And the Honourable  
Edward Vernon, *Esquire*,  
LATE GRAND PRERIDENTS;

And to all other the Past  
Grand PRESIDENTS and PRESIDENTS, OFFICERS,  
and BRETHREN of the Several ASSOCIATIONS

O F  
ANTI-GALLICANS,  
This S E R M O N,

(*Preached and Published by their Order*)

I S,

*With all due Deference,*

DEDICATED,

By their

*Affectionate Brother,*

*and obedient humble Servant,*

T. JONES.

A  
S E R M O N  
O N

JOSHUA xxiii. 11, 12, 13.

*Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.*

*Else, if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you;*

*Know for a certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.*

**T**H E S E words are part of the last speech which *Joshua* made to the *Israelites* after he had led that people into the promised land, and had given them a settlement there; and as they contained very useful instructions for their future conduct, he delivered them in a serious and solemn manner. That the advice he gave them might make the deeper impression on their minds, he delivered it just before his death. After he had conquered all the nations wheresoever they went,

and had brought them into the peaceable possession of the land promised to their fathers, he called all the elders, and principal men among them, to receive his last instructions. He begins with reminding them of the great and mighty works their God had done, and the many miraculous deliverances he had wrought for them. He cautions them to beware of falling from the worship of the true God, and of turning again unto idolatry. He recommends to them a steady adherence to the laws and ordinances of God, and promises them success and happiness upon their obedience. In order to preserve them from apostacy, to deter them even from being tempted to forsake the *God of their fathers*, he advises them to avoid all intercourse and communication with the people round about them; assuring them, that they would (by seducing them to idolatry, and by drawing them aside from their duty) infallibly lead them to misery and ruin. He bids them depend on the arm of God for support, as the only method to scatter and destroy their enemies.

*Be ye therefore very courageous to keep, and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom, to the right hand, or to the left. That ye come not among these nations, these that remain amongst you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them; neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them.*

*But cleave unto the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day.*

*For*



*For the Lord has driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.*

*One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God he it is that fighteth for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.*

This great and eminent person having punctually observed the commands of God, and performed the service appointed for him to do, lays before these people an admirable plan for promoting their future peace and tranquillity. He shews them the advantages that would attend the following his counsel, and points out to them the fatal consequences that would arise from a neglect of it. He had faithfully executed his commission, but not content with that, (so great was his affection to his brethren) he could not depart in peace without recommending to them a firm reliance on their God, and an implicit obedience to his laws. He proves the necessity of their avoiding all commerce with the idolatrous nations about them, by describing the pernicious effects such an intercourse would have upon them, and their posterity.

*Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.*

*Else, if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you.*

*Know for a certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you,*

As these are the rules prescribed by God himself, for the regulation of the conduct of his own people, they are certainly the fittest to be observed by us. As this laudable order was instituted with a design to guard against the incroachments of the natural enemies of this land, I imagined it would not be improper for us to consider how far the words of the text might be applied to ourselves. I have accordingly selected them for your present meditation. In my following discourse I shall endeavour to shew, *First*, The reasons of the advice given in the text for the *Israelites* to love the Lord their God, and to avoid all commerce with the neighbouring people. *Secondly*, The spiritual meaning of it (in which we are principally concerned) and then shall apply it to the present occasion.

And *first*, I am to shew the reasons of the advice given in the text for the *Israelites* to love the Lord their God, and to avoid all commerce with the neighbouring people. They were commanded to cleave stedfastly unto God, that they might thereby secure to themselves his blessing and protection. They were to depend wholly upon him, that in him they might have salvation. They were  
not

not to expect redemption by any of the idols of the nations, but to trust in the Lord their God. They were to avoid all communication with the heathens around them, lest they should draw them aside out of the true way, and seduce them to idolatry. To preserve them from which, and to fix their hopes on *Jehovah* alone, they had been so miraculously preserved. When their fathers went down into *Egypt*, they carried with them a knowledge of the true God; they remembered the everlasting oath that he swore unto them, and depended on that for their salvation. After the death of *Joseph* another king arose, *who despitefully used that people, and persecuted them; the Egyptians had them in subjection, and put a yoke of iron on their necks; they bound them with hard bondage, and entreated them evil four hundred years.* As they deprived them of their liberty, so they alienated them from the knowledge of the true God. They brought them over to idolatry, *insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which turned to their own decay.* At last God saw their misery, and he heard their complaint. He sent his servant *Moses* to deliver them from their slavery and thralldom, and to bring them out into a *wealthy place.* In order to reduce them to obedience, to convince them how vain and ineffectual the idols of the *Egyptians* were to save them, he enabled him to perform *many mighty works.* He made his punishments of that people instructive to *them,* and proved by their destruction, the insufficiency



of the powers they worshipped. As it was among the children of *Israel*, God (in his infinite wisdom) chose to preserve the earnest and evidences of the redemption of all mankind, he gave a commission to his faithful servant, and performed such miracles by him as could not but convince them of his omnipotence. These miracles proved the truth of *Moses's* divine mission, and were designed to make them *understand how that God by his hand would deliver them*. And accordingly *Moses*, in every miracle he wrought, not only punished the *Egyptians* for their infidelity and hardness of heart; but also fully proved, that the powers (which they worshipped) were unable to deliver them out of the hand of God, or to controul his power.

And here it may not be improper to take a survey of the state which the *Egyptians* and all mankind (a very few excepted) were then in. After the dispersion of the first peoplers of the earth, which happened some time after what is called the confusion of *Babel*, the sons of men, depending on their own abilities, and trusting to their own vain imaginations, (like the infidels of our modern times) soon lost sight of the original and true God; and as their own reason told them they were not the cause of their own existence, and pointed out a superior being, they began to worship the host of heaven: they paid adoration and divine honours to the material agents: (the heavens or  
names,

names,\*) *And worshipped the creature more than the creator, who is over all blessed for ever.*

They were lost and bewildered in an inextricable labyrinth and maze of error. They were sensible they had some-how incurred the divine displeasure, and had some imperfect notions that God (or what they had substituted in his room) was to be appeased by blood. Hence the many sacrifices and oblations made by all nations with one consent, nay many of them went so far as to conclude, that the sacrifice of beasts alone was not sufficient; that human blood was necessary to make atonement for them. Hence those horrid and barbarous rites performed by many; *their offering up their sons and their daughters, and causing them to pass through the fire unto their gods.* By the salutary effects they felt from the powers in the heavens, (for these people were not so wrong in their philosophy as some imagine) I say, by the comfortable influences they perceived on their bodies, and on every thing here below, from the powers in the heavens, they concluded them to be intelligent beings: they mistook them for the true God; and imagined the services they received from them were the effects of their own will and over-ruling power: not considering that they were inanimate, and that these powers were vested in them by God, that they might preserve and keep in order this vast machine. So grossly stupid and besotted were they

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grown. Misled by this notion, they imagined these powers would preserve their souls as well as bodies: they looked up to them alone for blessing and protection here, and for eternal happiness hereafter. They substituted certain things on the earth as their emblems and representatives, and worshipped them accordingly. If we examine the histories of the ancient heathens, and their several religious ceremonies and observances, we shall see this matter fully proved. We may trace in almost all their institutions, images, and throughout their whole mythology, the dependance they had on those powers in the heavens. I might take notice of some relicks of this practice, which remain to this day in the most uncivilized countries: altho' the original meaning of them is now lost. Now the *Israelites* by the close connection they had with these people, during their slavery among them, were brought over to those abominable practices. They revolted from God, and were drowned in the same ignorance with the *Egyptians*. It was necessary therefore, before they were freed from their captivity, that their eyes should be opened, and that the ridiculous opinions they had entertained should be exposed, that they might be ashamed of their misdoings; that their repentance might be sincere, and that they might cleave more stedfastly unto God after their reformation: and therefore the various miracles exhibited by *Moses* were calculated for this purpose. The course of  
nature



nature was altered, and her powers controuled, to shew God's superiority and sovereignty over them. By changing the influences, and altering the properties of those powers, they and the *Egyptians* at last perceived, that *the most high ruleth over all*. By these miracles God reclaimed, as due to himself alone, the services they had paid to the material agents; and convinced them that they were only of his appointment.

After this the *Israelites* were conducted by a series of miracles (all tending to the same purpose) on their way in the wilderness: they frequently murmured and rebelled; and fell back into their old sins, *starting aside like a broken bow*; and were as frequently convinced of their impiety, and of God's power in the most awful manner. They saw, by many miracles, their dependance on him; and had a service appointed them to remind them of him; and point out to them that method of salvation which was, *in the fulness of time, revealed through the gospel*.

After the death of *Moses*, *Joshua* was appointed his successor: he was reserved to bring them into their promised country: he gained many signal victories over their enemies; and, at last, gave them a quiet possession of the land of *Canaan*. Thus we have seen what was the idolatry of the nations round about them; no less than a depriving God of the honour due unto his name, and giving it unto his creatures, even to birds, and  
four.

four-footed beasts, and creeping things: the consequences of which were their being forsaken of God, and punished in the most exemplary manner. Well then might the great captain of this army of *Israel* leave them such a solemn charge to be faithful to their God, and to avoid the idolatry of the nations. But, besides this, there was still another reason for their avoiding all communication and intercourse with these nations; and that was, that they would soon supplant them, and gain their country from them. The heathens looked with a very wishful eye upon the land of *Canaan*, and omitted no stratagems to obtain possession of it. They were sensible, if once they could insinuate themselves into the good graces of the *Israelites*, and make that people admire their customs, it would not be long before they gained their wished for end; if once they could persuade them to revolt from God, they knew they could then have no reason to expect his protection; if once they could prevail on them to forsake him, to abandon the religion of their forefathers, and *the good old paths* they were trained up in, it would then be no difficult matter for them (the heathens) to carry their point. The event proved it to be true. When that people had entirely revolted from God, and filled up the measure of their iniquity (for that time) their enemies took away their place and nation; upon their defection from God, they were abandoned by him; and thro' the luxury and debauchery introduced among them by the heathen nations,

nations, they were unable to withstand them; they were *led into captivity* by them, and their land was *given over into their enemies band*: they then perceived it was not to them, but to their country, their adversaries had paid their court, and they were accordingly transplanted into distant lands, and their own *land strangers devoured it*. This was the effect of the disregard shewn by the *Israelites* to the advice of *Joshua*. This was the result of that confidence they had placed in the open and avowed enemies of them and their God.

This may suffice for the first thing proposed, which was to shew the reasons of the advice given in the text, for the *Israelites* to love the Lord their God, and to avoid all commerce with the neighbouring people. I am now to consider, in the *second* place, the spiritual meaning of these words, in which we are more immediately concerned. Now *no scripture is of private interpretation*. Whatever  *hath been written aforetime was written for our learning*. *All scripture is written for our instruction*.

We are to observe, that the people of *Israel* were those among whom God thought fit to preserve the evidences of his kingdom, and the emblems of the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ; which he had determined before the world was, and which he shewed to *Adam* immediately after the fall. The church of *Israel* was representative of (nay really was) the church of Christ. Their great leader *Joshua* (whose words we are now considering)



was a type of Jesus Christ, the great leader and captain of our salvation. The land of *Canaan* into which they were brought, was a type of heaven which he has purchased for us with his own blood. The enemies they were cautioned to avoid, as those who would supplant them in their inheritance, were typical of the spiritual enemies we have to encounter with; and which, unless we fight manfully, will deprive us of our eternal inheritance. The baits and allurements of a wicked world, the lusts and affections of sinful flesh, and the wiles of a most malicious enemy the devil.

We are to cleave stedfastly unto the Lord our God, unto *Jehovah* our Redeemer. We are to fight under his banner: we are to let nothing draw us aside from the covenant we have made with him; nor to expect that happiness from worldly objects, which we can only obtain through his merits: we are to beg God's grace, and the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to lead us through the wilderness of this world: we must avoid all sin and wickedness, all those enemies round about us, *those foes of our own household*, the corruptions of our own hearts, lest they dispossess us of our heavenly *Canaan*: we must, by no means, desert our Redeemer, lest he forsake us at a time when we shall stand in the greatest need of his presence; we must beseech him to mortify and kill all vices in us, and *endue us with power from on high*. I shall close this head with the words of a truly pious and

and ingenious \* writer, who thus expresse himself on this passage, *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.* “ If these “ were strong motives” (alluding to the two preceeding verses, wherein the *Israelites* are promised success in all their undertakings, and victory over their enemies :) “ if these (saith he) were strong “ motives to that people of gratitude and obedi- “ ence; how much more engaged are we thereto “ by the greater victories which our heavenly “ *Joshua*, the blessed Jesus, hath obtained for us “ over our spiritual enemies; and which he still “ daily performs in us? Yea, if we follow him, “ and fight manfully under his banner (as in our “ baptism we promised to do, and for that end “ were enlisted under him) then shall *one of us* “ *chase a thousand*; not indeed by our own strength, “ but by *the power of Christ*; for the Lord our “ God, he it is that fighteth for us; *in all these* “ *things we are more than conquerors thro’ him that* “ *loved us.* How just and reasonable is it, that “ we *take good heed unto ourselves, that we love the* “ *Lord our God*; love him as our Saviour and “ mighty deliverer; but withal revere and believe

\* The learned and judicious author of *The Essay on the proper lessons*, a very useful and christian work, which I would particularly recommend to every one’s serious perusal. This worthy gentleman deserves the thanks of every sincere christian, for the religious zeal he every where expresseth for the honour of our Redeemer, and for his close and dutiful attachment to our excellent church.

“ in

“ in him as the Lord our God: Lord of all things,  
 “ but by a special and peculiat right, the Lord and  
 “ the God of christians. *Else, if ye do in any wise go*  
 “ *back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations,*  
 “ *even these that remain among you, and shall make*  
 “ *marriages with them, and go in unto them, and*  
 “ *they to you: know for a certainty, that the Lord*  
 “ *your God will no more drive out any of these na-*  
 “ *tions from before you; but they shall be snares and*  
 “ *traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns*  
 “ *in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land*  
 “ *which the Lord your God hath given you.*

“ By the laws of arms, desertion is a capital  
 “ offence; and death the penalty, whenever the  
 “ criminal is retaken by his prince. In the chris-  
 “ tian warfare, the same law obtains, but with this  
 “ fearful difference, that the deserter meets with  
 “ his punishment in his very crime; the very act  
 “ of desertion is death. To forsake Christ, is to  
 “ forsake life: to forsake his banner is choosing  
 “ death. *For he, who so seeks to save his life, shall*  
 “ *lose it.* Nevertheless, we are not to take this in so  
 “ rigid a sense, as if every relapse or straying from  
 “ our colours were an unpardonable crime. The  
 “ captain of our salvation is not so severe: the  
 “ king of *Israel* is a merciful king. If he takes  
 “ us again, we are safe; all his captives are sure  
 “ of mercy, if they accept of it upon his terms.  
 “ For he seeks those that are lost; not to destroy their  
 “ lives, but to save them. The deserters, who for a

“ cer-



“ certainty, are to be punished with death by his  
“ law, are the obstinate and perverse renegades,  
“ who not only go back and desert, but renounce  
“ his service, and cleave to his enemies; that is,  
“ who turn apostates from grace, and *deny the*  
“ *Lord that bought them.* Such as those, *who go*  
“ *back*, may, here read their sentence, that *the*  
“ *Lord will no more drive out their enemies from be-*  
“ *fore them.* He will leave them to the power  
“ and dominion of those lusts and corruptions,  
“ which in this life will prove *snares and traps unto*  
“ *them.* That is to say, will betray them from one  
“ wickedness to another. *As scourges in their sides,*  
“ *and thorns in their eyes, until they perish:* That is,  
“ will be their tormentors in this life, and the  
“ eternal perdition of soul and body in the next.

“ So that what St. Paul saith to the *Hebrews*, of  
“ the danger and fatal consequences of apostacy,  
“ is the true comment on this passage, *If we sin*  
“ *wilfully after that we have received the knowledge*  
“ *of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for*  
“ *sin; but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery*  
“ *indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”*

Having thus finished what I proposed from the words of the text, I must beg your patience while I make a short application of them to the present occasion. And here, I doubt not, you have been beforehand with me in drawing the parallel between the enmity subsisting between the *Jews* and the heathens round about them, and that between us

and a neighbouring nation : I consider the *Jewish* people in a political light only at present ; and the consequences attending their giving too much encouragement to these nations, who endeavoured to supplant them in the good things they enjoyed, and to bring them into slavery.

Although the religion of *France* is not so idolatrous, as was that of the heathens mentioned in the text ; yet is it not wholly free from idolatry : and that it is a religion very unworthy of God is certain. Although papists do not rob God of his honour, as the creator and governor of the universe ; yet they certainly rob him of his honour as a Redeemer, by ascribing so much as they do to the intercession of saints and angels.

If we view the *French* in a political light, we cannot but see the necessity there is of our avoiding (as much as possible) all intercourse with them, as highly detrimental to our trade and nation. We do not profess an enmity to the persons of that country, as men, and as christians, *God forbid ! That be far from us !* *French* politicks and *French* intrigues are what we profess ourselves declared enemies to : Our national interest requires it. There are many protestants of that nation now resident among us, who are zealous advocates for the cause of Christ ; and who have done no small service to the trade and interest of *Great-Britain* ; and who are as real ANTI-GALLICANS in their hearts as any *Englishman* can be. We, I say,

say, exprefs our averfion to thefe artifices, and designing stratagems of the court of *France*, whereby ſhe endeavours to ſubvert our conſtitution; to ruin our country; and to make it a province to herſelf. This certainly is an undertaking worthy every free-born *Engliſhman*. We have experienced the regard that nation has for us in various ways, in her undermining and ſupplanting us in our trade abroad, dividing us into factions and parties at home; kidnapping (as I may ſay) our natives for her ſervice; and ſupplying their places with a ſet of ſycophants, who are hardly worthy the name of men; ſtealing from us our manufactures, and encouraging our artificers by large gratuities, (who, ſorry I am to ſay it, have too little encouragement at home) to forſake their native country, and to give their labour, and exerciſe their ingenuity, to aggrandize her wealth, at our expence.

It would be impertinent, in me, to pretend to deſcribe the real injuries we receive, in point of trade, from our too great intercourſe with that nation, to an aſſembly who have ſhewn themſelves ſo perfectly maſters of the ſubject, by inſtituting this very laudable and truly patriot order.

The encouragement you give to our own manufactures, and the means you uſe to ſuppreſs thoſe of *France*, are worthy yourſelves, and loudly demand applauſe. Go on, then, my worthy brethren; and may you be ſucceſſful in this your commendable and truly *Engliſh* undertaking. And



indeed that court can have no reason to complain, since she pursues the same method for her own emolument. What encouragement does she give to arts and industry? What pains does she take to improve every, the minutest, article of her trade? And, certainly, *licet ab hoste doceri*. How truly great is it in you to stem the torrent of that haughty state, and to prevent (as far as in you lies) her making this nation a prey unto herself: for that state is not unacquainted with the arts of undermining this kingdom, in times of peace as well as war; by exhausting the riches of it, and giving us, in exchange, what shall still tend to the same end, *viz.* the impoverishing and enervating the people. It must then give real pleasure to every true *Englishman*, to see such a society exerting themselves for the honour of their country: headed by one who so well knows the artful stratagems of her enemies; and who has convinced them, that a brave and freeborn *Englishman* can make the stoutest of them tremble.

But although we can have no communication with that people consistent with our national interest; yet we cannot but admire that noble struggle now making by the patriots of that kingdom, for that inestimable blessing we of this nation are so happy as to be born to; *viz.* FREEDOM.

One would almost imagine (were it not that this worthy society were an objection to it) that if ever the Pythagorean doctrine of a transmigration would  
hold

hold good, it would do so in a political sense. One would imagine (but for the exception before made) that the genius of *Britain* (by a kind of political metempsychosis) was transfused into the patriots of *France*. May we never have their natural spirit of servility, *wholly* possessing us, in return! The *French* parliaments at present are composed of men, (*qui tales sunt utinam essent nostri!*) who have exerted so noble a spirit in the cause of liberty as would do honour to a *British* senate. Be it our care, however, not to be too indifferent while that court seems to turn all her thoughts to the present broils; but be prepared to rouse the *British* lion, whenever we have cause to suspect her emissaries are embarked on any design against us. The only method to prevent her gaining an absolute triumph over us, to prevent her raising herself on our ruins, is the method you pursue. The natural antipathy between the nations requires such a conduct. *Else, if ye do in any wise cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you;*

*Know for a certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.*

But the enmity borne to us by the court of *France*, and the many insults we have received from her since the *Norman* conquest, were fully proved, on your last anniversary, by a *very* able and masterly hand \*.

Before I conclude, I beg leave seriously and earnestly to recommend to you (as it is more immediately my province) the cause of our holy religion. If our trade and national interest suffer by our communication with that people, sure I am the superstition imported from thence by some, but deism, and infidelity by many more, give fresh and frequent stabs in our Redeemer's side. As you profess yourselves jealous of the honour of your country; be jealous for the honour of the Lord your God. While you endeavour to promote the prosperity of *England*, do what in you lies to support the church of *England*; be careful especially to adhere to the doctrines of her articles and homilies; which, though at present very much despised, contain many excellent and christian truths. Prove yourselves faithful disciples of Jesus Christ; that after having served your country here, you may by a stedfast faith in his all-prevailing and all-atoning merits be admitted, *into a country not made with hands eternal in the heavens.*

\* The Reverend Doctor *Free*.



*The* BEAUTIES *of* SPRING.

A

# S E R M O N

Preached at the

PARISH-CHURCH

O F

St. Saviour, Southwark ;

In MAY 1756.

THE THIRD EDITION.

S 4

P R E F A C E



I T is a well known fact that the  
revival of the study of the  
this book is the result of the  
the best of every kind of  
published in the British Museum  
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from the day in which their kind influence  
around us there has been nothing, as yet ad-  
vanced

# P R E F A C E.

**I**T is a real pleasure to the author that he can congratulate his countrymen on the revival of inward religion and vital holiness in this land.—The amazing progress the gospel has lately made among us cannot but rejoice the heart of every true believer in **JESUS**. My brethren in the ministry must particularly rejoice, when they see the “work of the **LORD**” thus prospering in their hands.\*

It is the desire of my soul to be in some degree instrumental in promoting this glorious work: with this view I put forth the following discourse, hoping that it may be made useful to those in whose hearts a work of grace is begun, and excite a thirst after righteousness in such of my dear fellow-mortals as are yet in their sins. Our Saviour often works by the meanest instruments. May he be pleased to work by me!

It is worth observing that, while the important truths contained in the following sermon are daily shedding their kind influences around us, there has been nothing, as yet, advanced



vanced in opposition to them that needs an answer.—It is their peculiar advantage, who have the honour to be despised for CHRIST, that the doctrines they teach are not only to be found in scripture, but are plainly taught and strongly enforced by the church of England. And I cannot help remarking that, of all the pieces hitherto published against, what some chuse to call, the new way of preaching, *not one* of them takes notice of the proofs we bring in support of it from the articles, homilies and liturgy of our own church. A confession, surely, this, that the authors of those pieces cannot invalidate the arguments that are brought from her authority.—They content themselves therefore, with bare assertions instead of proofs, with bitter invectives instead of arguments, and too, too often, by very unchristian, not to say ungentleman-like expressions, plainly discover “what manner of spirit they are of.”—Would to God these persons might be humbled before him, and experience the blessings they now despise!

# A S E R M O N O N

CANTICLES ii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 10. *My beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.* Ver. 11. *For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.* Ver. 12. *The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.* Ver. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs and the vines with their tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

**I**T is a common practice with many to banter and ridicule what they know nothing of. The Apostle describes such persons under the character of those who *\* speak evil of what they know not.* Whatever is beyond the reach of their shallow comprehensions, they immediately determine it to be absurd and ridiculous. This disposition has induced several to treat the book of **JEHOVAH** himself, not only with indifference, but with the utmost scorn and contempt. Many

\* JUDE 10.

there

there are who peruse the sacred scriptures merely to find an opportunity of cavilling at the great truths contained in them. To such as these, till their hearts are renewed by the spirit of God, the scriptures will be only a dead letter; and the frequent perusal of them will but minister to their greater condemnation. It has been the fate of the book of *Canticles* to meet with much of this treatment. This book treats of the love of *Christ* to his church, or faithful people. The mere natural man, who has never experienced, nor desired to experience, the power of this love in his own heart, cannot but pervert it to such lewd purposes as his own filthy imagination suggests. But, however the devil and his agents may turn the food of God's people into their own poison, yet this food will be always welcome and delicious to those who are nourished and strengthened thereby; thus much by way of preface.

I shall not spend your time in defending the authenticity of this book, nor the justice of its comparisons, against the objections of infidels and carnal reasoners; but shall only observe, that this book of *Canticles* was dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, and describes the excellency of our Redeemer, and his love to his people, under such images, emblems, and similitudes as are the best suited to convey an idea of it to them. In the words of the text, he invites us to leave our natural state of guilt and misery, and to partake of those



those graces and blessings he purchased for sinners by his own blood. The church is introduced as giving an account of our Lord's invitation to her : *My beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo ! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land ; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

These words may be considered as the language of *Christ* to his church, or as his kind invitation to the returning sinner. It will furnish us, I hope, with great instruction to consider them in both these senses ; and may the good Spirit of God enable us to discern the beauty and propriety of them, while we consider them in the first place, as the language of *Christ* to his church.— You must be sensible that the church of God, throughout the sacred pages, is compared to a wife, or a virgin. It would be endless, and I presume needless, to remind you of the several passages where this comparison is made. Our blessed Redeemer speaks to his church (and here by church is not meant any particular church, sect, or party alone, but the whole church of Christ, howsoever distressed, or wheresoever dispersed throughout the whole earth) Our blessed Redeemer, I say, speaks to his church in the words

words of the text, under the same tender and endearing character.—I have often observed that man, being composed of a body as well as a soul, can receive no ideas but by the mediation of his senses. For this reason, throughout the sacred writings, ideas of spiritual things are conveyed to us under sensible images and illustrations: emblems are taken from nature, in order to acquaint us with the spiritual truths of the gospel; in the passage before us we have an instance of this sort. Christ expresseth the love he bears his church, and his readiness to be united to it, by the image of that tender union, which ought at least to subsist between every married pair. *Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.* What endearing and engaging titles are these! How loving and condescending is it in the merciful Jesus, to bestow such epithets on his church! for, lovely as she is in his eyes, fair and beautiful as she appears before him, the members that compose her body are such miserable and ungrateful sinners, my brethren, as you and I are. How then can the church of Christ, being composed of such distorted limbs, appear amiable and well proportioned in his sight? Not for any intrinsic worth or excellency in *her*, you may be certain: the church of Christ, considered in itself as composed of sinful members, is really vile and polluted with guilt: mankind in themselves are sinful, helpless, and wretched: what could any in their unhappy situation do to attract the notice  
and



and observation of the blessed Jesus? Why, my brethren, that very wretchedness and state of pollution excited the bowels of compassion in him.

—Those whom the king delighteth to honour, had nothing to recommend them; nothing but his free grace, and unmerited love, induced him to be favourable and propitious to them. The xvith of *Ezekiel* will convince you of this, and I would earnestly recommend it to your perusal. The Lord addresses his church, in that chapter, and cuts off all occasion of *boasting on her behalf*, by telling her \*, *I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live: yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live.* When she was polluted with guilt, when *none eye pitied her*, then the bowels of the blessed Jesus were moved with compassion to her, and he *spake comfortably unto her*: And, to convince his people that he really loved them, he divested himself of his glory, was cloathed with frail and feeble flesh, and at last shed his blood to wash off all their impurities.—Who then among you, my sinful, seeking brethren, who among you can doubt the loving kindness of Jesus, when he has done so much to convince you of the love he bears his church? But how can this church be said to be amiable and lovely in the eyes of her Lord and husband, when the members of her body are defiled with sin? We read that God *hateth iniquity, and that no evil can dwell*

\* Ver. 6.

with



*with him.* How, then, can sinful creatures, *laden with iniquity*, be united to him by that strong tie, of which the matrimonial union is the known emblem? Why, here, my brethren, is the *great mystery of godliness*. This is what *the angels desired to look into*. And to solve this difficulty, to unite these contending parties, (as a holy God and sinful man must be allowed to be) he united their two natures in himself; he bore the sin and guilt of his church upon his own body, being *made sin* for it. Christians, therefore, however sinful they are in themselves, yet in Christ Jesus are *clean from their iniquity*, and freed from guilt. The blood of Christ hath freed them, and they are lovely in his eyes. Lovely they most certainly are, since he laid down his life for their sakes. How should this tender compassion of Christ excite the gratitude of his people, whom, merely for his own unmerited mercy, and on account of their wretchedness and misery, he thus engagingly styles his love?

But our Redeemer stops not at this title, but calls the church his *fair one*! This seems more astonishing than the former appellation: it was mercy beyond expression to love a set of beings who had so often provoked his anger, and rebelled against him. Yet the bowels of Jesus's mercy might indeed yearn over them, and excite a pity which was ripened into love. But, to pronounce her fair, i. e. free and clear from all defilements,

seems

seems a paradox indeed. The church, or congregation of believers, as composed of sinful members, must of consequence be spotted and defiled with sin; but then, by the mystical union of the two natures in the person of Christ, her sins were transferred to *him*; *his* righteousness is imputed to *her*. How the enemies of imputed righteousness can otherwise account for this description of the church in the text, is to me, I own, a mystery; but, in this light, the riddle is expounded. The church of Christ is lovely and fair in the eyes of God, as being cloathed with the wedding garment of the Redeemer's righteousness. As this glorious privilege will excite her gratitude, so will it always make her humble, when she recollects that, fair as she is, yet, like the moon, she shines in a borrowed lustre; that she is indebted for all her splendor to the great *sun of righteousness, who rose upon her with healing under his wings*. This fair and lovely bride, whom he hath loved with an everlasting love, (admire, O my soul! this amazing mystery of redeeming grace) this bride, which is his church, resolves this seeming paradox, in her description of herself. *I am \* black, but comely (O ye daughters of Jerusalem)* I am black and defiled with sin, considered in myself; but I am comely and fair, as being invested with the righteousness of my Lord. This church (which our Lord purchased with his own blood) he calls

\* Chap. i. 5.

T

upon



upon to arise from the slumber her enemies would betray and keep her in, and to come to him by prayer and faith. He invites her to come away from poverty and distress, from the power of her foes, and shelter herself in his beloved embraces. He invites her to come away from her fears, to come away from the land of scarcity into that delightful garden which his right hand had planted. In the following verses he gives her the reason of this invitation, and describes the blessings he had provided for her : *For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.*

The blessed Jesus, in this sweet passage, describes the gifts and graces of his church under the emblem of spring ; wherein nature rises from her gloomy slumbers ; and puts on her gayest livery. The present season of spring is nature's resurrection, and reminds us of the resurrection of our Redeemer, as also of the christian's resurrection from sin to grace here, and from the dreary regions of death, to the bright mansions of glory hereafter.—It is impossible for any thing to be more elegantly descriptive than the image of the spring given in the text ; and had it been found in any classic author, it would have been loaded with praises, and extolled to the skies.

But



But it is in God's book, and therefore is passed by unnoticed.

Our blessed Redeemer, in order to give us the highest idea of the flourishing state of his kingdom, paints it to our view under the pleasing image of this season of spring; what the sun does at this time in nature, Jesus Christ, the true light of life, continues to do in grace. By taking a short survey of the delights of spring, you may be able to form a faint idea of those delights attending a spring-time in the soul. May the spirit of God give you all to experience it for yourselves! but to observe the parallel: how delightful, my brethren, is the present return of spring to us all! in winter, we saw creation deprived of all its ornaments, the trees and plants were stripped of their verdure, and the fertilizing sap retired to their respective roots. The fruit of the vines and fig-tree failed, and the field did yield no meat; every thing had retired to silent slumbers, and lay buried in the grave of the earth. But, now, blessed be God, who remembers us, how much soever we forget him, now the scene is changed; all nature is revived, and wears a smiling aspect. The cold dark winter is past, the nipping frosts are ceased, *the rain is over and gone*, the stormy winds and deluge of waters are stopped, and the earth now receives such gentle drops (at proper times) as enables it to send forth its fruits in its season. *The flowers appears on the earth*, and per-

fume the air with their fragrant sweets. *The time of the singing of birds is come*, and they delight the ear with their melodious notes ; having, at last, found a place for the soles of their feet upon the slender twiggs, they tune their little throats, and upbraid their admiring hearers while they warble forth their gratitude in hymns of praises to their God. *The voice of the turtle is heard in our land*, which, having been benumb'd by the winter's cold, is now revived, and, by its constancy to its mate, reads the lawless libertine a lecture upon chaste affection. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs*, in the more southern climes, and yield a delicious repast to the weary traveller. *And the vines with the tender grape*, in places near the sun, give a good smell, and dispense their pleasing odours to all around them.—The fig-tree and the vines, where *Solomon* reigned, were remarkable for their fragrancý and deliciousness. And, in those souls where a *greater than Solomon* reigneth, the fruits of the Spirit shall abound more and more.

This is the image our Lord makes use of, in order to convey to his people an idea of what he has done and is still doing for his church. The blessed Jesus invites his church to come unto him without any fears or doubts, for all dangers are removed. You that are the happy members of this mystical body, can bear your testimony to the truth of what I am about to deliver : and here, if my description falls short, (as I am sure it must  
of



of what you have happily experienced) yet bear with me, while I attempt to give the outward people a view of what your gracious Lord has done for sinners, that they also may be invited to come in.—Christ, then, invites his church, or faithful people, to arise and come unto him. Hear this, ye that have tasted of his redeeming love. Arise, and call upon your God. Rouze yourselves, ye highly favoured of the Lord, from all carnal fears. Are ye in a gloomy disconsolate frame? Come away to Jesus, whose arms are open to shelter you from impending danger. Fear no evil, for it is all removed. *The winter is past*; this is the first blessing your Redeemer has purchased. You were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. You were born in sin; you remember what it was to be in the cold winter of spiritual death, and in the dark night of guilt. Happy for you, my brethren, this *winter is past*. The sun of righteousness arose and dispersed the clouds of ignorance and unbelief, and a glorious gospel has broken in upon your heart. *The rain is over and gone*; the storms of God's wrath rained down vengeance upon him for your sins and transgressions. Sin excited God's anger and indignation; but, to your unspeakable comfort, the storm is blown over. He sustained the heaviest of his Father's wrath, that you might have none of it to bear. He has wrung out the dregs of that bitter cup, and left the sweet for you.



*The flowers appear on the earth*; even in the rude soil of your earthly minds, have the seeds of grace been sown; which, by the enlivening rays of your Redeemer's righteousness, spring up into fair and pleasant flowers. The graces of the Holy Spirit evidence your profession, and your good works are the fruit of your faith. And although, till your sun approaches nearer to you, you will be exposed to many a chilling blast, which may threaten the destruction of your flowers, yet, being rooted and grounded in your master's love, ye need not fear. Although a cloud may hide his genial heat for a season, although the wind of temptation may shake you for a time, yet a little while and the cloud shall be dispersed; the storm shall cease when it has purged the air of pestilential vapours, and the glorious sun of righteousness shall break through all opposition, shall exhale the mists and damps of fears and doubts, and shine upon you with redoubled splendor. *The time of singing of birds is come.* Grateful hymns and spiritual songs are sent up to your Redeemer by the faithful: prepare to join in the same delightful exercise. In your wintery state, indeed, you had no root, were made a prey by your enemy, and fell into the snare of the cruel fowler. But now, *the snare is broken, and you are delivered*: now you are returned, with an olive branch of peace in your mouths pluck'd from the true olive tree, which is for the healing of  
of

of the nations ; in which you find a peaceful shelter from the storms that blow around you, and may sit and “ sing among the branches.” *The voice of the turtle is heard in your land.* The heavenly mystic dove, the holy Spirit of God, applies many comfortable promises to your souls. He has assured you of your peace and pardon, and he often breathes upon you, and brings a kind message from him whom your soul loveth. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs.* You are not barren fig-trees ; you have not only the leaves of an outward profession, but are desirous of abounding in the fruit of all good works. Perhaps indeed infirmities may retard your growth, but your fruit is put forth, the tree may be known what it is, and in due time ye shall be transplanted into that happy soil, where nothing shall interrupt the shining of your heavenly luminary upon you. *The vines with the tender grape give a good smell.* Wild and uncultivated as you were by nature, being ingrafted into the true vine, you produce grapes, though as yet they are but tender ; which nevertheless send up a grateful smell, a pleasing odour to the Almighty, as being the fruits of his Spirit.

Thus, my brethren, have I given you a faint sketch of your glorious privileges ; not so much to inform you, of whom I have greater need to learn, as to win the careless and unawakened sinner to an ardent longing after a share in your happy circumstances. Now the great alteration that



is made in nature at this season, is owing to the chearing influences and genial warmth of the sun's light. From hence all vegetative life and power springs; it is impossible for the least shrub or meanest plant to spring from its grave of dust into vegetative life, without the reviving influence of the sun's rays: equally impossible would it have been for you, ye sons and daughters of the Almighty, to raise yourselves from the grave of sin and death, in which ye were buried by nature, had not Christ, the light of the world, wrought upon your hearts, and given the glorious order, *loose them and let them go*.—It is observable that a vine of itself will never grow upright; unless it be supported by a wall, or some other prop, it always creeps upon the ground. Were not you supported by Christ, the wall of salvation which God hath appointed, you likewise would still continue to creep upon the ground. Your affections would be low and groveling! and 'tis your happy union to Christ that has raised you up.

The blessed Jesus having given you the sweet description of your privileges in the text, renews his invitation to you to *arise and come away* to him. Rise then, ye heaven-born souls, *come away* from all defences of your own devising: *come away* from fears, from doubts and disquietudes, and take your sweet repose in the Mediator's arms. But it is time I should remember my promise by giving a short view of the text as relating to the returning sinner:



nor do I think the words in the least forced while thus applied.

And here, perhaps, some seeking doubtful soul will start a difficulty at once, and say, *I am sure you will force the words, if you apply them to me, the first part especially. How can I believe those endearing titles, my love, my fair one, belong to me?* Indeed, my brother, they do belong to you. Your very concern is a token of your Redeemer's love. If you ask what there is in you to excite your Saviour's love? I will answer freely, nothing; but rather much to excite his anger. But if there is nothing in *you*, there is much in *Jesus* to induce him to extend his loving-kindness to you. His bowels yearn on the returning sinner, and he will most assuredly deliver him. Fear not then the applying to yourselves this happy appellation. Although in yourselves you may be black and defiled with sin, yet in Christ Jesus you are fair and comely in the sight of God. Your sins are nailed to your Redeemer's cross, and his righteousness is imputed to you.—I desire I may not be misunderstood here. I would not be thought to encourage any hardened impenitent sinners to hope for mercy, and still live in sin: God forbid. These are not the persons I am speaking to; and indeed they don't desire comfort from Christ; they are quite unconcerned about it. I speak this to encourage the penitent sinners: to them I say, there is mercy for the vilest sinners; and those who are concerned  
for

for their sins, who desire to be freed from the power as well as the guilt of them, are entitled to the Redeemer's mercy. To these I say, and repeat it again, your sins are nailed to your Saviour's cross. Fear not therefore, nor write bitter things against yourselves. To prevent your doing this, your blessed Lord gives you a most engaging title; *arise, my love, my fair one*; rendered so by my perfect obedience and death. *Arise* from unbelief, *come away*, from fears and distrust. Come to me: does the adversary pursue thee? Dost thou fear, or wouldst thou avoid the wrath of an angry God? Come to my arms, where thou shalt find a shelter. Do the enemies of your souls perplex, and do your corruptions bow you down? Come then to Jesus Christ by faith. Cast yourselves upon him; rely upon him; leave your whole concerns with him, and ye shall find him a sincere and faithful friend. Fear not to come to this Redeemer; for *lo! the winter is past*; the cold winter of sin is past by the rising of Christ the sun of righteousness in the flesh. *The rain is over and gone*; justice hath nothing to require of you, for he has sustained the stormy wind and tempestuous rain of his father's wrath. *The flowers appear on the earth*; the book of God, like a watered garden, abounds with pleasing flowers, with many comfortable promises, which you are invited and are welcome to gather. *The time of the singing of the birds is come*. The sound of a Redeemer is now sung in your ears. The ministers



nisters of Christ are no longer to you as sounding  
brass or tinkling symbals, but sing sweetly in your  
ears, whenever they preach a crucified Redeemer,  
*The voice of the turtle is heard in your land.* This is  
supposed to be a prophecy of *John* the baptist, who  
was to prepare the way of the Lord, and may  
therefore, with equal justice with the former clause,  
be applied to the ministers of Christ be they of  
what denomination they will. Christ is preached  
unto you, which is a sure mark of his love: for  
you may be assured that wherever the Lord Jesus  
enables a minister to preach his name with bold-  
ness, he has always some souls in that place. God  
grant it may be verified this day! *The fig-tree put-  
teth forth her green figs.* Here again will some  
doubting soul say, "Now I am sure the parallel  
"will never hold good; for if by the green figs  
"are meant the fruits of faith, I have none, I am  
"persuaded." Well, but they may be putting  
forth: are you acquainted with the nature of the  
fig-trees in those parts? That they may bring forth  
fruit unto perfection (as the learned Dr. Gill\* ob-  
serves)

\* In his excellent exposition of the book of *Canticles*, of which  
Mr. HERVEY gives the following just commendation, *viz.* that  
it has "such a copious vein of sanctified invention running  
through it, and is interspersed with such a variety of delicate  
and brilliant images, as cannot but highly entertain a curious  
mind. Which presents us also with such rich and charming  
displays of Christ's person, the freeness of his grace to sinners,  
and the tenderness of his love to the church, as cannot but ad-  
minister the most exquisite delight to the believing soul—Consi-  
dered



serves) "they are always scratched and grated with  
 "sharp iron hooks." Examine yourselves therefore  
 by this mark, and that will denominate you to be  
 "trees of the Lord's planting," although as yet  
 "he maketh not your fruit to grow." Your pre-  
 sent fears, anxieties and disquietudes (and I know  
 how to sympathize with you) are the goads or irons  
 which are necessary to tear off all your worldly  
 trusts and false confidences, that Christ the sun of  
 righteousness may shine out upon you with less in-  
 terruption, and cause your fruit to shoot forth and  
 bud and blossom—The other encouragement given  
 you to put your whole trust and confidence in  
 the Redeemer, is, that *the vines with the tender*  
*grapes give a good smell.* Ignorant as you may  
 be of it, you are grafting into Christ the true vine;  
 the sap and richness of this vine are communicat-  
 ing to you; and tho' your fruit may at present be  
 but small and tender, yet in the blessed Jesus you  
 yield a grateful incense to the father of spirits.—  
 My brethren, you may venture to believe me, that  
 these privileges are yours. Refuse not the repeated  
 invitation of Christ your Lord and spouse, *arise*  
*my love, my fair one*; arise from the dark dungeon  
 of legal fears; come away from the hold of un-

dered in both these views, I think, the work resembles the  
 paradisaical garden, described by *Milton*; in which

"Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue

"Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colours mixed."

*Theron and Aspasio*, Vol. III. p. 115. Note. 3d edit.

belief,

belief, and throw yourselves upon Christ the great strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; and may the blessed Jesus enable you so to do!

A word to the unconverted, and I have done. And may the spirit of God bless his own work. You have heard, my brethren, (if you have given me your attention) what great and glorious privileges the blessed Jesus has purchased for all those that believe, or desire to believe on his name; namely, pardon of sin, power over it, and a crown of glory. But you are quite indifferent and unconcerned whether you ever experience these blessings or not. To you, as yet, a crucified Saviour *has no beauty that ye should desire him*. Be honest, and confess the truth. Have you not been hitherto very little solicitous whether you have an interest in Christ or no! And yet, my dear brethren, unless you have, *good would it have been for you that ye had never been born*. But I won't threaten, I won't use terrifying words, I'll try what love will do. And now I have given my promise not to terrify you with severe threatnings, I hope you will promise me one thing in return; and that is, to give me your serious attention. I will not detain you long, but will say what I have to offer in a few words.

Convinced sinner, whoever thou art, (I know thee not, but I hope thy own conscience will find thee out) sinner, I have a comfortable message this day unto thy soul. Perhaps you doubt it. You  
have

have been a swearer, sabbath-breaker, &c. or at least, if you are outwardly decent, you have been quite indifferent about the comforts of the gospel. Yet, (can you believe it? stop and wonder at the news) to you, even to you, does the blessed Jesus speak in the words of the text. Spotted and defiled with sin as your souls are, yet if you do but find it in your hearts to be truly sorry for your transgressions, you are fair and lovely in his eyes: he will cast a veil of sweet oblivion over all your imperfections. Sinner, the Lord Jesus loves thee; he came down from heaven for thee; he was despised for thee; he suffered and he bled for thee; he shed his blood to wash thy soul from sin's defiling stain. Hear him then. Attend to his call, my dear unhappy, because my unconverted, brethren. Hear him as he hangs upon the accursed tree calling unto you, *Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.* "Little dost thou think that the blood thou now canst look on with indifference is shed for thee. Arise from thy present lethargy. Arise from thy present sinful state and come away. Come away from sin; come away from all thy former practices; come away from guilt, and let me embrace thee in the arms of love."

This is my master's invitation; and in the name of that adorable Jesus, and by virtue of the commission he has given me, I call upon thee, O man! I call upon thee, O woman! to crucify my dear Lord no more. And I promise thee, in the



name of the everlasting God, in the name of the sacred trinity, that if thou art enabled to turn and repent, and come humbly to the Lord Jesus Christ, that thy sins and thine iniquities shall be remembered no more. May the Spirit of God touch your hearts, and give you cause to bless him for the words I have spoken in your ears this day.  
*Amen.*

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READER,

**I***F thou art a stranger to the divine life, let me entreat thee to read with candour and attention the above address. "Escape for thy life" from the wrath of God; resolve in his strength, to seek salvation in our dear Saviour, and you cannot conceive what real happiness, what exquisite pleasure you'll find in the pursuit. You'll find peace of conscience here, and an eternal happiness hereafter. This happiness, courteous Reader, the Author wishes thee from his inmost soul.*

An

An H Y M N. From Dr. WATTS.

VER. I.

**T**HE voice of my beloved sounds  
Over the rocks and rising grounds ;  
O'er hills of guilt, and seas of grief,  
He leaps, he flies to my relief.

II.

Now thro' the veil of flesh I see,  
With eyes of love he looks at me ;  
Now in the gospel's clearest glass  
He shews the beauties of his face.

III.

Gently he draws my heart along,  
Both with his beauties and his tongue ;  
Rise, faith my Lord, make haste away,  
No mortal joys are worth thy stay.

IV.

The *Jewish* wintry state is gone,  
The mists are fled, the spring comes on ;  
The sacred Turtle-Dove we hear  
Proclaims the new the joyful year.

V.

Th'immortal vine of heav'nly root  
Blossoms and buds, and gives her fruit.  
Lo! we are come to taste the wine ;  
Our souls rejoice and bless the vine.

VI.

And when we hear our Jesus say,  
Rise up my love, make haste away !  
Our hearts would fain out-fly the wind,  
And leave all earthly loves behind.

The

**The GOOD of AFFLICTION.**

**A  
S E R M O N**

Delivered at

**The Parish Church of St. Ann, Limehouse.**

**On Trinity Sunday, 1760.**

**Preached and Printed pursuant to the last Will  
and Testament of**

**Captain J O H N S I B S O N,**

**Who departed this Life the Fifth Day of May,**



1801

The Good of Affliction.

Mrs. S. E. N.



Delivered at

A the Parish Church of St. Ann, Lincolns.

On Trinity Sunday, 1760.

of the Bishop and Rector of the said Church

and Testament of

Captain JOHN SIBSON.

Since Who departed this Life the Fifth Day of May

Prayers for the Soul of the said Captain

under the following

I have not the pleasure to be acquainted

with you, but I am very glad to hear

that you have been the good man

and are now to receive the same thing need-

ful

ing

I sincerely congratulate your choice, and pray God that every affliction may bring you nearer to himself, and evidently work to your eternal good!

TO

MRS. SIBSON.

MADAM,

AS you are so much interested in the awful event, which was the occasion of the following discourse, you are certainly the properest person, to whom it should be addressed.

Permit me, then, to beg your kind acceptance of it, with my sincerest wishes and prayers, that it may be made useful to you under your present visitation.

I have not the happiness to be acquainted with you, but it gives me real pleasure to hear, that you have "chosen the good part," and are eager to secure the "one thing needful."

I sincerely congratulate your choice, and pray God that every affliction may bring you nearer to himself, and evidently work to your eternal good !

I am, with great respect,

MADAM,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

Castle-street, Southwark.

June 12th, 1760.

T. JONES.



# S E R M O N

## O N

JOHN, xvi. 33. latter clause.

*In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

**T**H E S E words are the conclusion of that affectionate and pathetic speech our Lord made to his disciples, when he was about to “leave the world, and go unto his Father.” He prepares them by that tender and well-tim’d address, for the awful surprize his sufferings and death must necessarily give them.

He lets them know \* how expedient it was that he should *go away* from this lower world, that he might reign for ever in heaven, and from thence send down such gifts and graces upon his church, as should train her up to share with him, in his kingdom and glory.

And, as our Saviour acquaints his disciples with the near approach of his sufferings; so doth he take care to arm them † against the rude attacks which were shortly to be made upon their own per-

\* Verse 7—15.

† Ch. xv. 20, 21.

sons. In the verse preceding the text, he tells them, that little as they *then* intended it, they would ere long, be so staggered by the violence of temptation, as to decline, for a season, the spiritual warfare, and forsake him in his deepest distress. *Behold the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.* But that they might not conclude from hence, that he was unequal to the task before him, he immediately subjoins, *and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.*

Now, lest this his poor distressed family should be *swallowed up with overmuch sorrow* for their master's sufferings, and their own infirmity, or imagine his affection for them was abated by his foreseeing they would thus desert him; he kindly soothes their grief, and dispels their fears, by telling them, verse 33. *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.* He foretold his sufferings to convince them of his divinity, in being able to give them so circumstantial an account of what was still future, to prepare them for the worst, and to direct them where they might find a solid peace and tranquillity, however the storm of affliction might blow around them. All who are in him by a living faith, are at peace with God, and enjoy an inward peace and serenity in their own breasts. The blessed Jesus, *the prince of peace*, (as he is stiled *Isaiab ix. 6.*) forgot not his little flock, but was providing for its peace  
and

and security, at the very time he himself was exposed to the greatest injuries, to an ignominious and cruel death. Nor is our benevolent Redeemer less tender and affectionate in the latter clause of the verse, wherein he thus bids them a kind farewell.

*In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

While you continue in this *vale of tears*, a variety of distress awaits you: but, be not disheartened, yea, rather rejoice, for I, your friend and Saviour, have subdued the world, and rendered it a conquered foe.

As these words were *written for our admonition*, it is our interest as well as duty, to examine what lesson of instruction they contain.

To assist our meditations on this affecting passage, I shall endeavour to shew,

1st, That tribulation is the christian's lot, during his continuance here below, *in the world ye shall have tribulation.*

2dly, That nevertheless, the christian has reason to be of good courage, *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

A practical application of the whole, will conclude what I have to offer upon the subject.—And may the Spirit of the living God vouchsafe his blessing on what shall be delivered either out of his word, or agreeable to the same!



1st, Then, I am to shew, that tribulation is the christian's lot during his continuance here below.  
*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*

*Man \* is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.*

The world we live in is a scene of sorrow, and is daily exhibiting fresh instances of its inability to satisfy an immortal soul. The inhabitants of the earth are eagerly pursuing some favourite schemes of happiness; but, by the uneasiness and discontent observable among them, they all, with one consent, proclaim, the blessing, they are in quest of, mocks their pursuit, and flies far from them. The reason of which disquietude is plainly this: man is a fallen creature: he derives a sinful and polluted nature from his first parents: this evil nature sets him at a distance from God, the only fountain of happiness. The divine image at first impressed on the soul of man, not only bespoke his high original, but afforded him a constant source of joy and happiness. While he preserved his primitive innocence, a pleasing communion with God kept him free from every disturbance, blessed him with inward peace and tranquillity, and made him as happy as his heart could wish. —But, no sooner had he broke the divine command, than the heavenly image was defaced, his former happiness deserted him, and left an aching void in his heart, which no earthly enjoyments can fill up, no worldly aid relieve, nothing

\* Job v. 7.

less than God can satisfy. A man's own heart will tell him, that he is by nature, the miserable creature above described, dissatisfied with almost every thing about him, ever in pursuit of some happiness, he knows he wants, but is at a loss how to attain. The sacred scriptures will acquaint him with the reason of all this; namely, that he is descended from an impure original; that he *\* was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did his mother conceive him.* He is there told † that the guilt of his first parents is imputed, and he finds by wretched experience, that their evil nature is imparted to him.—The whole scheme of christianity layeth down this for its foundation, viz. That man is a fallen creature, and stands in need of that redemption and deliverance which this scheme proposeth. What wonder then, that mankind should be exposed to such a variety of inward and outward trials, when scripture and experience acquaint us, they have drawn it down upon themselves by their departing from the living God? If, more especially we take into our account the many actual sins and transgressions every one's own conscience accuse him of, we must be self-condemned, and say *thou ‡ art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.*

This is the only rational account that can be given of the origin of evil. This at once clears all the attributes of God, and lays the blame of sin at

\* Psalm li. 5.

† Rom. v. 12.

‡ Neh. ix. 33.

the proper door. By this account too, we are no longer at a loss for the reason why this world should present us with so much uneasiness and vexation, since we are taught, that sin hath set every man's hand against his brother, and made us the unhappy instruments of each other's trials. Indeed, where the benefits of education, the advantages of civil society, and particularly the blessings of christianity have polished and refined men's manners, much of this evil is abated. The kind providence of God interposing in our behalf, hath directed us how to blunt the edge of various calamities, and in some instances, to turn crosses themselves into blessings. But yet, we have inconveniences enough remaining to justify the scripture assertion, too many proofs of the fallen nature of man, and of his guilt and misery on that account. War, pestilence, famine, diseases and death, are the dreadful train, sin hath brought in with it, and one or other of them affords a constant fund of trouble to the sons of men.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, not only to account for that variety of afflictions we are encompassed with, but also to vindicate the providence of God from the accusations of mistaken men. For whoever considers this matter attentively must observe, that the tribulation, this world abounds with, is not the result of an arbitrary designation of our Creator, but the natural and unavoidable consequence of our rebellion against him. So long



as the heart of man is unconverted and estranged from God, (who alone can give us the happiness we lost in Adam) he must be miserable in any situation, and will carry his own tormentor with him, let him change his place as often as he will.

Nay, so far from impeaching the divine perfections, are "the sufferings of this life," that they rather magnify the goodness of God to his sinful creatures. As this world is not our home, but we are passing through it with an incredible swiftness, to an eternal state; how good, how gracious is it in our heavenly Father, thus to write vanity on every creature-comfort, and thereby call off our attention from the objects of sense, from an unsatisfying, perishing world; to *seek his kingdom which cannot be moved*, and his favour *which is better than life itself*. This is a method he often uses with the children of men, and many an exemplary christian has had reason to say, *before I was troubled I went wrong*. Afflictions soften the human heart, and prepare it to receive the good seed, which is *the word of God* \*. And when the sinner is humbled by his troubles, and returns to his gracious Redeemer, he will then acknowledge with the psalmist, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*.

Let us not then arraign the justice of our sovereign Lord, but make a becoming use of the disasters of life, by calling upon God for his hea-

\* Luke viii. 11.

venly grace, to wean our affections from this world, and to fix our hearts on that spiritual and divine life, wherein *true joys are to be found*. Besides what has been said in vindication of the dealings of God with the sons of men, let us remember that he hath made a full and ample provision for their recovery. \* *God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* What we lost in Adam is abundantly made up to us by JESUS CHRIST. If the guilt of the former is imputed to his posterity, the perfect righteousness of the latter is imputed also to his faithful people. For, † *as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* As our first parent hath entailed misery and death on all who persist in his rebellion, so the second Adam hath purchased life and peace for his real disciples, for he is the ‡ *author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.* Behold, then, a glorious display of the divine philanthropy! God himself becomes the sinner's friend and surety, and puts him into a method to convert his worst troubles into the most substantial blessings. This consideration, as we shall see hereafter, will support the christian under his afflictions, and enable him to glorify God in the fire of tribulation.

\* John iii. 16.

† Rom. v. 19.

‡ Heb. v. 9.

It would be almost endless to recite the numerous troubles the christian is exposed to, in common with the rest of his fellow-creatures. But, besides these, there are certain trials affect the believer as such, and often distinguish him from the generality of men. But before I proceed farther, it may not be amiss to observe what the term, *christian*, implies. Now, by this word, I would not be understood to mean a person, who makes only a bare profession of christianity, but one who is a christian in deed and in truth. One, who from a consciousness of his own vileness, has fled for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ by a living faith, and hath received with thankfulness the free salvation he came to purchase. One, whose faith is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, and discovers itself in a life of holiness and uniform obedience to the will of God. This, I apprehend, is the true definition of a christian, and in this sense, I desire to be understood, wherever the terms christian or believer occur in this discourse.

Of such an one we affirm, that tribulation is his lot, during his pilgrimage here below. And this a tribulation, which is often peculiar to the christian as such. It is not uncommon to see the true believer exercised with sundry afflictions. Now, this is not only a striking argument for the truth and certainty of a future state, wherein these seemingly unequal distributions shall be set right, but a proof also of that peculiar relation, the believer



liever stands in to the Most High. For \* *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

Ingratitude and treachery of pretended friends, the resentment and malice of enraged enemies, teach him the vanity of the creature, and incline him to a still closer union to that friend, who never faileth nor deceiveth. Disappointments in life wean him from the world, and prompt him to pursue that true felicity, which no force, nor fraud can deprive him of. Frequent sickness, and all the painful attendants on a feeble constitution, read him a silent but instructive lecture on his own mortality, and bid him turn his eyes to a glorious resurrection, when *this corruptible body shall press down the soul* no longer, when *this earthly tabernacle shall no more weigh down the mind, which museth upon many things.* Another trial the believer in Jesus must expect, is persecution from the world. This seems to be the principal meaning of the word *tribulation* in our text. However fair the christian might stand with the men of the world before his conversion; no sooner does he renounce his former sins, and seek in earnest the kingdom of heaven, than they declare war against him. Openly deriding, or secretly reviling him, and trying every expedient to bring him back to his former evil courses. And, although outward, violent persecution is a stranger in this happy

\* Heb. xii. 6.

island; yet the believer finds tribulation enough to exercise his faith and patience, to convince him that \* *the friendship of the world is enmity with God.* While he continued a rebel to his God, he had the world's esteem; but upon his true repentance, he must expect according to his more public or private station, to feel more or less of its resentment.

Now the use the believer makes of all these troubles, is to glorify that God, who chasteneth him in this life, that he may not be condemned with the world. He examines his own heart, to see for what particular sins these visitations are respectively sent, and humbles himself under the mighty hand of God. He pours out his heart in earnest prayer, that these afflictions may be sanctified, that patience may have its perfect work, and that all the graces of the blessed Spirit may be brought into act, and exercise by him. His prayer is heard, and he hath faith given him to *see all these afflictions working together*, for his real, his eternal good.

I might also mention the great tribulation which the children of God experience at times, from their own hearts, and from the dangerous temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil.—But, as I have drawn out this head to a greater length than I intended, it is time for us to consider, that notwithstanding tribulation is the christian's lot, yet

\* James iv. 4.

2dly, He hath abundant reason to be of good courage. *Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.* In this I shall be very brief.

Our blessed Redeemer hath not left his church without a suitable relief under her troubles. He who hath bought the believer with his own blood, is leading him through these tribulations to the kingdom of God. Discouraging as outward trials are to mere flesh and blood, the christian's grief is most powerfully asswaged by that glorious hope that is set before him. *Be of good cheer*, saith our Lord to his disciples. *Θαράττε*, be confident, be courageous: \* *the word signifieth boldness, implying that our confidence in God, causeth boldness and courage.*

An hard lesson this, to be chearful, to be courageous and rejoice under heavy afflictions! But, when we consider the reason our Saviour gives us for this chearful patience in tribulation, we may cease to wonder. *I have overcome the world.* Bitter enemy as it is, to the disciples of the lamb, he hath vanquished and entirely routed its numerous hosts. He hath conquered the prince of this world, and reserved him in *everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.* Then shall the saints of God be witnesses of their Saviour's triumph. The christian is to remember, that his master overcame the world by suffering all it could lay upon him. By his meritorious death

\* Leigh's Crit. Sacr.



and blood-shedding, he hath made a perfect atonement to the Father's justice, for the sins of men, and hath purchased for them eternal life. By these sufferings, the enemy of our souls, *the prince of this world*, hath received a mortal blow. Death too, another of the sinner's adversaries, is disarmed of its sting, and the doors of everlasting happiness are now thrown open, and every poor returning penitent is sure to find an easy, a welcome admittance.

All these afflictions then, to a soul, truly justified through Jesus Christ, are no more than the gentle corrections of a tender father. The view of future bliss supports the believer in his present pilgrimage, he knows his troubles can have but a short duration, and his chief desire is to glorify God by a pious and cheerful submission to his righteous will. The contempt and reproach of the world now set easy on him, since his master hath so overcome it, as to render all its threats and malice feeble and impotent; he fears not the world therefore, *which cannot kill the soul*, but is rather solicitous to *fear him, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*.

Again, as our dear Redeemer hath overcome the world for his people; he also overcomes it in them, by arming them with his grace and Holy Spirit, by enduing them with patience, deadening them to the things of this world, weaning their affections from it, and raising them to sublimer  
X  
objects.

objects. In short, he giveth them a *victory that most effectually overcometh the world, even faith* in him. But, as I am fearful of trespassing too much on your time, I cannot enlarge on this pleasing subject. I shall therefore make a short application of the whole, and so conclude.

And 1st, Let us learn from the world's inability to give us real happiness, not to fix our hearts and minds upon it. Its greatest pleasures are dear bought, very short-liv'd, and too often detain the heart from pursuing its truest, its everlasting interest. Let the various crosses and trials we meet with, lead us to our Saviour's throne, that we may find *grace to help in time of need*. The real christian may consider them as tokens of his Father's love, and draw unspeakable comfort from the consideration. But how unhappy must your case be, who are surrounded with afflictions, and yet remain strangers to the solid comfort true religion inspires? let me entreat you to consider wherefore you are thus afflicted. Look upon your various disappointments, as so many gracious calls from God to bring you home to himself. Long have you wandered from him, long hath he had patience with you. But oh! take heed, I beseech you, lest if none of these things move you, ye be at length involved in everlasting ruin. Be ye well assured, that so long as you are strangers to that dear Redeemer, who endured so much for sinners—you have no reason to expect a blessing from  
heaven,

heaven, upon any thing you undertake. Remember withal, your breath is in your nostrils, and if you die in your sins, nothing can save you from the damnation of hell.—

But happy you who are returning home to your adorable Saviour, in true repentance. Your afflictions, it should seem, have indeed been sanctified, by rousing you from your carnal security, and inclining your hearts to seek the Lord. Fear not to draw nigh unto him. He will most certainly receive you, and if you are sincere, *neither do I condemn thee*, is the kindest language he will give you.

Again, let such as are united to our Saviour, by a living faith, be thankful for the privileges they are entitled to. Let them remember they are called to \* glory hereafter, and to virtue here, as the road that leads to it. That they are to improve every affliction, as an instructive lesson, to teach them submission to the will of God. Nor let them be dejected amidst the severest trials, since *he who is higher than the highest regardeth them*; and will make these *light afflictions which are but for a moment work out for them, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. They are put into the furnace, only to be refined, they shall lose nothing but their dross, and in due time, will be brought forth as gold tried in the fire.

\* 2 Pet. i. 3.

X 2

Courage



Courage then, my christian brethren, faint not in your spiritual warfare, your Redeemer goeth before you, he hath overcome the world, and in a little while you shall share with him in his triumph.

Once more we may observe that, as our blessed Redeemer overcame the world by suffering, we also must overcome it in like manner. We are not to repel the reproach and contempt we meet with, by returning railing for railing, nor rendering evil for evil, but must overcome our enemies by love, meekly submitting to the injuries done us for our Saviour's sake, exercising patience and forbearance to our bitterest adversaries. This is the true spirit of christianity, this is the readiest way to learn submission to the divine will, and to attain the holy art of contentment and resignation\*. The cross is the way to glory; and when we consider how earthly and selfish our hearts are, how stubborn our wills, how rugged our tempers, and how boisterous our passions; we shall see the necessity of these fiery trials to refine our spirits.

Thus have I finished what I designed, and, I hope, in some measure, fulfilled the will of the deceased. As I was a stranger to him, it cannot be expected that I should enlarge upon his cha-

\* I wish I may have influence enough with the reader, to prevail on him to pursue an excellent and masterly treatise on this subject. The title of it is, *The great Duty of Self-Resignation to the Divine Will.* By the late pious and learned John Worthington, D. D. Prebendary of Lincoln.

rafter. Indeed, discourses of this kind, are chiefly designed to convey instruction to the living, who alone can receive any benefit from them. Let *his* death therefore teach us to prepare for our own, and put us upon examining how matters stand between God and our souls, before we go *hence and be no more seen.*

I shall conclude all with the words of our excellent liturgy in the burial office.

“ O merciful God, the Father of our Lord  
“ Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the  
“ life, in whom whosoever believeth shall live  
“ though he die, and whosoever liveth and believeth in him, shall not die eternally, who also  
“ hath taught us (by his holy Apostle St. Paul)  
“ not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them  
“ that sleep in him ; we meekly beseech thee, O  
“ Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the  
“ life of righteousness ; that when we shall depart  
“ this life, we may rest in him, as our hope is  
“ our *deceased* brother doth : and that at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be  
“ found acceptable in thy sight, and receive that  
“ blessing, which thy well-beloved Son shall then  
“ pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying,  
“ Come ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you, from the  
“ beginning of the world. Grant this, we beseech thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus  
“ Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*”

master. Indeed, the number of this kind, are chiefly designed to convey instruction to the living, who alone can receive any benefit from them. In death therefore teach us to prepare for our own and put us upon examining how matters stand between God and our souls, before we go home.

2. I shall conclude with the words of our collected psalm in the burial office.

"O merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life, in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die, and whosoever liveth and believeth in thee, shall not die eternally, who also hath taught us (by his holy Apostle St. Paul) not to be sorry, as men who are sorry, for that thou hast in him; we most joyfully believe that, to raise us from the dead in the resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ, that when we shall appear before thee, we may be found in the faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ himself hath done; and that at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight, and receive that blessing which thy well-beloved Son hath purchased for us, and that we may be able to stand in the presence of all the holy and just spirits, and be counted children of thy Father."

"Give the kingdom prepared for you, from the beginning of the world. Grant this, we beseech thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen."



A  
S E R M O N

Preached at the PARISH-CHURCH of  
Saint LAWRENCE JEWRY,  
near GUILDHALL;

On *Wednesday, November 18, 1761.*

BEFORE THE  
S O C I E T Y  
FOR

Promoting RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE  
among the POOR.

THE THIRD EDITION.

TO THE WORTHY  
SOCIETY



Promoting RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE  
among the POOR ;

This SERMON is,

With all Esteem and Respect, inscribed  
and dedicated, by

*Their faithful, and*

*willing Servant,*

*for CHRIST'S Sake,*

T. JONES.

A

S E R M O N  
O N

2 COR. V. 14.

*The love of Christ constraineth us.*

**I**T is a material defect in all the systems of morality which have been left us by the heathen sages, that however beautiful and lovely they have painted virtue to the eyes of men, representing her precepts as very conducive to their truest interests; yet *how to perform that which is good they find not*: they convince us, it is true, of the reasonableness and necessity of moral goodness, but furnish us with no power or principle, whereby to reduce their precepts into practice. They leave mankind the same poor, helpless creatures they find them; convinced indeed, that universal obedience is justly due from a creature to his creator, enamoured with the charms of virtue, making many a feeble effort towards the practice of it, but so tied and bound with the chains of a corrupt and depraved nature, that *when they would do good, evil is present with them*.

Nor are the schemes proposed to us by the sons of infidelity in our own times, less discouraging. They have nothing to offer in exchange for the gospel of Christ, that will at all secure the glory of God, or produce a moral change in the hearts  
of



of men. That *evil bias*, which our natures have received, continues still an insuperable difficulty, how refined and well digested soever their systems are. To give mankind the power as well as the inclination to please God, and to serve him acceptably, is the sole prerogative of his own revelation. What all the systems of men could not accomplish, the christian dispensation hath most happily effected. That blessed book, the *Bible*, not only acquaints us with our natural sinfulness and misery, but also points out to us the means and method of recovery; shews us on whom our help is laid, and directs us where to apply for strength and grace to carry every good purpose into execution. Real christianity inspires the soul with a vital principle, whereby the practice of virtue and goodness, so hard to nature, is made easy and delightful.

Such a principle as this the Apostle refers to in our text: he had gone through many hardships for the gospel's sake, had met with many difficulties, was exposed to many dangers, and held in contempt by the wise and prudent of the world, for making the great professions he did, and for submitting to such inconveniencies as his ministerial labours brought upon him. But, strange and infatuated as he and his associates appear in the eyes of carnal men, they were actuated by the noblest principle, namely, a principle of love and gratitude to their dear Redeemer. This it was that made them superior to every difficulty, and caused *every mountain to become a plain*, before them: *the love of Christ constraineth us.* In

In my further discourse on these words, I intend to inquire,

I. What we are to understand by the *love of Christ*.

II. How the *love of Christ* may be said to *constrain* us. And,

III. What the *love of Christ* constrains us to.

And then, in the last place, I shall conclude with an application suitable to the present occasion.

“ And may the words of my mouth, and the  
“ meditations of all our hearts, be now and ever  
“ acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength,  
“ and our Redeemer !”

The generality of interpreters understand this expression in two senses,

1st, As referring to the love of Christ to his church, and 2dly, as expressive of a love of Christ implanted in the heart of the true believer.

We will therefore consider the expression in both these senses : and first, as referring to the love of Christ to his church. How great this love was will appear, if we reflect to what unspeakable misery sin had reduced mankind. *In Adam we all died*. The iniquity of our first parents, with all its guilt and aggravation, was charged upon their posterity : nor was their guilt imputed to us only, their sinful and corrupt nature is also imparted to all their descendants. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me*, saith the psalmist \*. *By one*

\* Psal. li. 5.

*man's disobedience, many were made sinners, saith the Apostle to the Romans, v. 19. And, not to multiply proofs, (especially to this assembly) we read in the 12th verse of the same chapter, By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Indeed the scriptures are full of this important truth, and the whole scheme of our redemption goes upon this supposition; namely, that man is a guilty, fallen creature, and stands in need of a Saviour to rescue him from misery and destruction.

Whoever finds himself unwilling to believe this scripture-doctrine of original sin, need only examine his own heart, and take a view of what passes there; how great an aversion to God and goodness, how strong a propensity to all that is evil, how close an attachment to this present world, and he will be soon convinced, he carries about him a very clear, though a very melancholy proof of the truth of it. Men are strangers to this truth, because they do not attend to it, because they will not turn their eyes inward. They flatter themselves their hearts are not so bad, and desperately wicked, as the word of God represents them to be.

For the heart of man is like some stagnant lake, which, though full of putrid filth, yet in calm serene weather, when the soil is settled at the bottom, presents a surface that looks like clearness and transparency; reflects the opposite sun, the element, and neighbouring trees, and would pass

on



on the unwary spectator for pure and wholesome water: but let the air around it be put into motion, and its waters be disturbed and agitated by a gathering storm, and straightway it loses its agreeable aspect, the filth arises and overspreads the surface and the beholder views it in its proper state. Thus the heart of man, in his natural state, appears to others, nay to the man himself, as quite devoid of that spiritual filth and corruption the book of God charges upon it. While all goes on to his wish, or while conscience is lulled asleep, the sinner views not himself in his native deformity. He fancies himself possessed of many virtues, and from a discovery of some amiable qualities, he imagines his heart to be a purer fountain, than it is represented to be in scripture. But let afflictions befall him, let temptations assault him, and make an attack upon his passions, especially let the spirit \* of God awaken him to a sense of his sinfulness and danger; and immediately corruption begins to rise, unholy tempers shew themselves, unbridled appetites and unmortified lusts strive hard for the mastery, and threaten him with a total overthrow: then is the sinner experimentally convinced of the truth of that scripture, *the † wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.* This, then, is the state of man, possessed of a sinful and depraved nature, far gone from origi-

\* See Rom. vii. 9.

† Isaiah lvii. 20.

nal righteousness, and unable of himself to please his great Creator.

Involved in this guilt and wretchedness, we were exposed to the penalties of a broken law, and obnoxious to the wrath of an offended God. To deliver us from this complicated distress, the eternal God, of his own mere mercy and goodness, was graciously pleased to find out a way, whereby all his glorious attributes might harmonize in the redemption and recovery of sinful man. This redemption was effected by his only begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This truly comfortable method of salvation was revealed to our first parents soon after their fall; repeated to the patriarchs; was delineated to the Jewish church in all their various ceremonies and sacrifices; and more clearly predicted by the prophets. And, in the fulness of time, since so great was our misery, that nothing short of omnipotence could effect our cure, this \* *Almighty Word leapt down from heaven, out of his royal throne*, into this our benighted world. Wherever this sun of righteousness appeared, he dispersed the clouds of ignorance and error. This captain of the hosts of the Lord dealt deadly havock among our spiritual enemies, and *opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers*. When we consider how great this person Christ Jesus was, in the glory he had enjoyed before all worlds, we cannot surely but acknowledge it was wondrous love that brought him hither.

\* Wisd. xviii. 15.

Contemplate the blessed Redeemer of men, as surrounded with cherubim and seraphim, and all the host of heaven, and then view the meek and lowly Jesus, chearfully submitting to veil his divinity and godhead in a tabernacle of human flesh, and contented to become a despised man for our sakes and for our salvation. Contemplate him as sitting in the kingdom of heaven, infinitely happy in his own perfections, and having all creatures at his control, and then consider him *who endured such contradiction against himself*. Consider him, who shall one day come with tremendous pomp to judge the world, standing as a malefactor at a tribunal of his own creatures. In short, behold him going about doing good, dispensing health and life to all he met with; submitting chearfully to hardships and reproach, proclaiming pardon and salvation to a guilty world, working out a complete salvation for all his true disciples, by an exact and universal obedience to the divine law which they had broken, and by suffering himself to be put to death on the cross; and then let us say, whether we have not abundant reason to admire and adore the *love of Christ*. How strong an idea must we form of our Saviour's love, when we consider, that by what he hath done and suffered for us, a complete atonement is made for all our sins, our pardon purchased by his blood, together with grace and power to live to the glory of God, and an eternal inheritance reserved for us in  
the



the kingdom of heaven. It was surely a *love that passeth knowledge* that moved him to bear our load, and to suffer the punishment due to our sins and transgressions. For we read in the 53d of *Isaiah* \*. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

Again, when we observe how constantly this love of Christ to his church has exerted itself, since he hath not only purchased her with his blood, but hath guarded and protected her to this day, watched over her with amazing care and tenderness, and promised to be with her always, even unto the end of the world; we cannot but adopt the Apostle's prayer †, *that we may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*; and say with him, ‡ *Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour.*

Would any sincere christian have his views of our Saviour's love enlarged, let him only recollect the time when he lived in his sins unrepented of, at a distance from the God of his salvation, the sport of every temptation, the slave of Satan, borne down by a torrent of sinful and unruly passions, and then let him inquire, if it was not wondrous love, which took pity on him in that deplorable situation, plucked him as a brand out of the fire, awakened him to a sense of his danger, and upon his humble application for mercy, flew to his relief, and spoke peace to his guilty heart.

and

Ver. 6.

† Eph. iii. 19.

‡ Eph. v. 2.

Long

Long as I have dwelt on this particular, I cannot prevail upon myself to leave it, without acquainting the poor thoughtless sinner, if any such be here, that this *love of Christ* is free for *him*, ready to be manifested to *his* unworthy soul, will he but repent and turn to God. O hear, and would to God you might obey, his gracious invitation. *Come\* unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Laden your consciences are, and heavily too, with the weight of sin unpardoned: what guilty fears, and dismal apprehensions of death and judgment will, at times, thoughtless as you are, break in upon you! Apply then, I beseech you, to this dear physician of souls, and he will heal you: if you are but willing to become his disciples, he like the sun in his meridian glory, will dispel the clouds that hang around your hearts, will burst through your nature's ten-fold night, and introduce life and light, and peace and joy to your sinful souls.

We are in the next place to consider the expression in the text as denoting a *love of Christ* implanted in the heart of the true believer. The real christian, sensible how much he is indebted to rich redeeming grace, cannot but feel a principle of gratitude stir within him. A love to his dear Redeemer is shed abroad in his heart, and his beloved appears in his eyes *the fairest among ten thousand.* This it is that makes the service of God to be perfect freedom: the paths of holiness no longer seem

\* Matth. xi. 30.

rugged and unpleasant, but he delighteth in the law of his God. For, be it observed, that this *love of Christ*, which the believer experienceth, is not a mere rapture of animal passion, but a solid operating principle wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, and inclining the possessor of it to the love and practice of every thing that is good and praise-worthy. This gives wings to his obedience, and makes him eager to perform his master's will.

This is the disposition of a child of God, *the \* upright love thee*, saith the church; and again, *† Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest*. Under the influence of this divine principle, the christian, though conscious of a thousand imperfections, can say with the disciple, *Lord, ‡ thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*. Here then is one peculiar excellency of the gospel scheme, in that it doth not, like human systems of morality, require brick without straw, but furnishes the true believer with power over his corruptions, and strength to obey the commandments of God. The grace of God, or *love of Christ* in the heart, being a powerful spring and principle of all holy obedience.

Which leads us to inquire,

II. How the *love of Christ* may be said to *constrain us*. The word we render *constrain* signifies, to have a person entirely in one's power, and to carry him wherever we will; and *by the love of Christ* "constraining us," we are to understand a power-

\* Cant. i. 4.

† Ver. 7.

‡ John xxi. 15.



ful principle in the christian's soul, sweetly subduing the corruptions of his heart and bearing him away in the practice of every gospel duty. And the passage is paraphrased in this sense by the learned Doctor *Hammond* \* on the place.

Not that we are to imagine the Spirit of God does violence to our natural powers; or makes mere machines of men: no, he deals with us as with rational creatures, and addresseth himself to the faculties of our minds. Truths are presented to the understanding; which being enlightened, and the judgment settled, the will is secured on the side of holiness, and the affections are made to follow. The *love of Christ* gently inclines the will, and sweetly constrains the soul to all acts of holy obedience. And by this blessed principle, far superior to every motive human systems furnish, the disciple of Christ is carried on, and like some gallant ship, wafted by winds and seas, *arrives at the haven where he would be.*

Thus what human schemes can never accomplish, in that they have no power over the heart of man, what the law cannot do, in that *it is weak through the flesh*; the *love of Christ*, a supernatural and divine principle rooted in the heart, fails not to produce. Actuated by this, the christian follows not a round of duty with irksomeness and disgust, as some heavy drudgery; but esteems it

\* Doctor *Hammond*'s words are these: "*Our love to Christ, founded on his to us, hath us in its power, to make us do whatsoever it will have us,*" See also *Leigh's Crit. Sacr. in verb.*

his privilege to walk in the paths of God's commandments. *It is his meat and drink to do his heavenly Father's will.* Sin is his grief and burden; nor is he at any time so truly happy, as when he enjoys communion with his Lord, and is enabled to glorify him in a life of holiness. A war is declared in his heart against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and it is the desire of his soul, to fight manfully under the captain of his salvation.

“Are your minds then set upon righteousness, O ye congregation, and do ye wish to practise the thing that is right, O ye sons of men?” Do you long to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and to be translated into the *liberty of the sons of God*? Look up to him in fervent prayer and faith, that he would implant this blessed principle, this *love of Christ* in your hearts, that you may “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” But we are to inquire,

III. What the *love of Christ* constrains us to. The *love of Christ*, or the saving grace of God in the heart, is an active, practical principle, leading the person influenced by it, into the observance of every duty relating to God, our neighbour, or ourselves. The particulars of which, it is not to be expected, I should now enlarge upon. Suffice it to remark, that in vain do men talk of the gospel, and experiencing the *love of Christ*, if their lives and conversations correspond not with the professions they make.

I mention this, because there are many in these days who have much to say for gospel-truths, and make great pretensions to the *love of Christ*, but for want of proper fruit in their conduct, too often bring reproach on our most holy faith. The truth is, men of sanguine tempers and strong passions, may work themselves up to a certain pitch, and from an extraordinary flow of spirits, which may be accounted for mechanically, are led to fancy themselves the favourites of heaven, and assuredly possessed of *the love of Christ*, and, if there be something of an animal affection to the person of our Saviour, excited by hearing of his love to mankind, the persuasion will be so much the stronger; and it is no uncommon case, to see the persons above described, impelled by fiery zeal, bitterness of spirit, self-sufficiency and conceit, spiritual pride, attachment to system and party, and many unholy tempers directly repugnant to the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus. Now the *love of Christ*, truly and properly so called, goes much deeper: it is not a notion in the head, or a mere impulse on the passions, but a solid principle of holiness, seated in the heart, and influencing the life and conversation. And a man may be an utter stranger to those sensations some persons of sanguine tempers experience, and yet be undoubtedly constrained to holiness of life by the *love of Christ*.

That person may be assured he is led by this divine principle, the desire of whose soul is to the Redeemer's name, and who makes it his study to



glorify him in a pious and holy life. For \* *the grace of God hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*

So that the love of Christ constrains the actual possessor of it into all acts of piety and holiness towards God; teaching him to reverence his sacred name, his word, his ordinances, his day, and holy will and pleasure; and enabling him to wait on the Lord in frequent fervent prayer. With regard to himself, it makes him concerned to keep a constant watch over the appetites of his body, and the tempers of his mind, that he *be not overcome of evil*. With respect to his neighbour, this heavenly principle admonishes him *to keep a conscience void of offence*; to observe a decent and quiet submission to authority; to be strict and just in all his dealings; to render to all their dues; to be particularly conscientious in the discharge of every relative and social duty. Whatever be the true believer's state of life, he considers himself as placed therein by his beloved Lord and master, that he may glorify him in his generation. And without a peculiar attention to these things, religion is no more than a name. For † *herein saith our Saviour, is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples.*

Moreover, the true disciple of the blessed Jesus considers himself as indispensably bound to live in charity with all men, especially to love all

\* Titus ii. 11, 12.

† John xv. 8.

those who own the Lord Jesus, however distinguished by names or parties. Not confining his affection to any particular set of men, but to let his love be unlimited and uncircumscribed, like that of his heavenly Father, who *caused the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*—He will also think it incumbent on him, to bear with the infirmities of his brethren, and to cherish a spirit of forgiveness and love, even to his bitterest enemies, meekly submitting to censure and reproach, and patiently bearing the cross of Christ. He will make it his study to do all the good he can, both to the bodies and souls of men; to their bodies, by contributing to their necessities, and giving them all the relief the providence of God shall bless him with ability for. Especially will it be the delight of his heart, to render every service in his power to the immortal souls of his fellow-sinners. Sensible what blessings himself hath found, he will long to communicate them to others also; like one, who, lately preserved in shipwreck, and safely landed on some hospitable shore, looks out for his friends and brethren, who are still toss'd on the tempestuous ocean, buffeting the waves, and exposed to the merciless fury of the storm; throws out a signal, and endeavours to draw them to the happy spot where he has found shelter and security.

And this leads me to conclude with an application suitable to the present occasion.

Actuated, we trust, by the motive in the text, the present SOCIETY embarked in their laudable design to promote the glory of God, and the eternal welfare of their fellow-creatures. Beholding with concern the deluge of wickedness that overspread their country, they were *constrained* to stand forth and plead the cause of Christ, against the prevailing iniquities of the times. The principal objects of their charity, are the *poor* and *ignorant*, amongst whom they make it their business to distribute bibles and other practical books. And when we consider how much these persons stand in need of such helps, and that the emissaries of the church of *Rome* are but too successful in poisoning the minds of the ignorant and unwary, all *good* men cannot but approve this excellent institution.

This SOCIETY consists of ministers, and private christians of different denominations; and by a happy extinction of parties, they agree to leave all lesser differences, and firmly unite in promoting the cause of religion and virtue. And it is amazing to think, how the good providence of God hath smiled upon their attempts. They have met with great success among their poor and ignorant brethren, not only in this city and suburbs, but also in many other parts of the kingdom: nor is their charity confined to this nation only, our *American plantations* partake of their bounty, and many poor negroes abroad, who were strangers to the gospel of Christ Jesus, are now sending up praises  
and



and thanksgivings to almighty God, for the benefit they have received from this SOCIETY. It is now above eleven years, I think, since this SOCIETY was first established, in which time they have distributed upwards of *ninety-two thousand* bibles and other religious tracts. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.*

Such being the nature and the design of this SOCIETY, they hope you will not deny them your charitable help and assistance. They beg, in behalf of thousands of your poor brethren, that you will leave something behind you towards carrying on this *work and labour of love*. Contribute cheerfully, if in your power, and give with a willing mind; nor fear the bread you cast upon the waters shall be lost, for you shall find it again after many days.

Having thus briefly acquainted you with the laudable intentions of the charity, and solicited your kind assistance, *will* you indulge me with a few minutes, while, with all deference and respect, I beg leave to offer a word of advice to the *members* of this SOCIETY?

And in the *first* place, my honoured brethren, let the consideration of the goodness of God, in blessing our feeble attempts with such wondrous success, excite our praise and thankfulness. How can we but adore the riches of divine goodness, in employing such unworthy creatures, and making  
ing

ing one poor sinner his instrument to the conversion of another? To him be ascribed the glory and the praise.

*2dly*, Let our success hitherto animate us to persevere. Discouragements we must expect, but the God whom we serve reigneth over all. Reproach is the constant attendant upon these schemes which tend to promote the interest of religion; but let us be of good courage, and remember that, in such a cause, reproach is our greatest honour.

*3dly*, Let us be often putting up our prayers to the God of all grace, for the continuance of his blessing on this our institution, and that he would be graciously pleased to own our endeavours to the salvation of many souls.

*Lastly*, Let us be particularly careful, my beloved brethren, of our own lives and conversations; be it our study, not only to *speake* but to live for Christ. With how ill a grace shall we offer instruction to others, if our lives contradict the professions we make? Let our own upright and exemplary conduct be a comment on the books, which we put into the hands of our poor brethren: let us convince the world we have been with Jesus, *by shewing forth his praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives.* And, as many as walk according to this rule, *peace be on them, and mercy and upon the Israel of God.* Amen.

**S E R M O N**

Preached at the

**V I S I T A T I O N**

OF THE

**Reverend Dr. THACKERAY,**

**ARCHDEACON of SURRY;**

*On Tuesday, September 16, 1755.*

AT THE

**PARISH-CHURCH**

OF

**St. SAVIOUR, SOUTHWARK.**

**THE SIXTH EDITION.**



TO

The REVEREND and WORSHIPFUL

Dr. THACKERAY,

ARCHDEACON of SURRY;



The REVEREND the CLERGY

OF THE

DEANERY of SOUTHWARK,

This SERMON is Dedicated

With all due Deference and Respect,

*By their affectionate younger Brother,*

St. Saviour, Southwark,  
Oct. 10, 1755.

T. JONES.

T H E  
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I first composed this sermon, I had no thoughts of committing it to the press, nor, indeed, for some time after I had delivered it; but, as I find it has been misrepresented by some, and mistaken by more, I now send it abroad to answer for itself: I send it forth as my public testimony, and the world is welcome to treat it as it shall think proper. I am prepared for the offence it will unavoidably give to *some people*; but, blessed be God, I am not to be terrified with an hard name. If the blessed Jesus shall be pleased to accompany this discourse with his divine grace, and make it the instrument of convincing any *one* of my brethren, I shall think myself amply rewarded for my trouble.

1837

THE  
PREFACE  
TO THE  
VINTAGE

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own eyes, and make it the instrument of  
converting any one of my brethren, I shall  
feel myself amply rewarded for my trouble.  
I am, my friends, your affectionate friend,  
and from house to house, I shall  
be glad to see you.



A

## VISITATION SERMON.

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ACTS Chap. xx. latter part of the 26th verse.

—*I am pure from the blood of all men.*

**H**APPY *Paul*, who could make this assertion! Happy are those of his successors, who can make his words their own! May the eternal God increase their number! These words are part of *St. Paul's* address to the elders of the church at *Ephesus*, when he was about to depart from them. His affairs would not permit him to go to *Ephesus*, but, when he was at *Miletus*, he summoned the elders of the church to appear before him; and, when they were come to him, he said unto them, *Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you, at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which beset me by the lying in wait of the Jews; and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, tes-*  
tifying

*tifying both to the Jews, and also the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold I go, bound in the Spirit, unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God shall see my face no more: wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. The doctrines St. Paul laboured so earnestly to inculcate, were, repentance, or conversion to God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: this was the commission he had received; and, because, by the grace of God assisting him, he had executed it faithfully, recommending it by his own example, and sparing no pains to bring souls on their way to his blessed master, he therefore declared that he was pure from the blood of all men.*

This commission every minister of the gospel is honoured with, and it is incumbent on us to imitate the Apostle's practice, that we too may be able to say, when we are called to give an account of our stewardship, *we are pure from the blood of all men.* We cannot but be sensible it will be our greatest happiness to be able to make this declaration ;

ration; and, before we can justly declare this, we must have performed, as far as in us lies, what is required of us as ministers of Christ, and what we have solemnly promised and sworn to do.

I shall, therefore, make it my business in the following discourse, to set forth the great duties of a gospel minister, and then to make a suitable application to ourselves.

And may the holy and eternal Spirit of God vouchsafe us his gracious presence at this time, may he take all our hearts into his own possession, may he remove all opposition and prejudice from our minds, and enable us to attend with meekness on what shall now be delivered, either out of his word or agreeable thereto.

First, then, I am to set before you the great duties of a gospel minister.

And here, my reverend and honoured brethren, let me intreat your serious and candid attention. If I speak plainly, impute it to a desire of discharging the office assigned me, and not to any inclination to offend.

'Tis impossible to give a full view of the ministerial duty in the small compass of a discourse: I can only instance in a few particulars: and first, 'tis our duty to preach, not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The Apostle in the text declares, that he is *pure from the blood of all men*, because he had preached *repentance toward God, and faith*



*in our Lord Jesus Christ.* These are the doctrines we are to preach; we are to tell the people committed to our charge, that they are fallen creatures, that their nature is depraved and corrupt, and that they must come to the Lord Jesus Christ for repentance and faith to have that evil nature removed. The whole scope and tenor of the scripture runs thus: that man is a fallen creature, that his nature is averse to God, and that he has no power to turn himself *from darkness unto light* by any will of his own. The scriptures represent mankind in a state of nature, as dark and blind; they declare, that nothing can enlighten an unconverted soul, but the reviving rays of Christ the sun of righteousness. They give us no account of the dignity of our nature, they do not amuse us with a detail of our moral excellencies, but tell us in plain terms that we are *born in sin*, that *there is none righteous, no not one*, that *we are all by nature gone out of the way*, that *we are altogether become abominable*; they tell us also, that nothing can raise us from this dismal state but the operations of the Spirit of God; that of ourselves we cannot so much as *think a good thought*. *These things* therefore, we are to *teach and exhort*; for, till we make our hearers sensible of their sinfulness and danger, we cannot expect they will apply to the remedy. We are to inform the people committed to our charge, that there is an absolute necessity for their seeing their  
own

own vileness, before they can be made partakers of the grace of the gospel.

After having convinced sinners of the error of their ways, and, by the blessing of God on our ministry, induced them to seek for mercy, we are then to point out to them the Lord Jesus Christ, the dear Redeemer of the world, who died for their sins, with whom there is mercy, and with whom there is plenteous redemption; we are to advise them to beg the assistance of the Holy Spirit of God to apply the merits of this blessed Redeemer to their hearts: it is our duty to warn sinners of the danger they are in, and to invite them home to the blessed Jesus, through whose merits we are to propose to them a free salvation, without their own merits or deserving.

Amusing our hearers with schemes of our own, with systems of natural religion, which never had any existence but in idea, is not preaching Jesus Christ; wrapping them up in the conceit of their own abilities is diametrically opposite to the gospel, and the greatest injury we can possibly do them.

Again, as the people are not to be harangued on the dignity of their nature, so neither ought they to be told that their own works can plead their cause with God, or that they have the least hand in their justification. It is our duty (if we would be faithful to our trust) to inform them, that they must come to Christ as sinners, owning their

insufficiency, and ascribe to him the whole glory of their salvation.

We are told in scripture, that *the heart of man is only evil continually*; that *God hath concluded all under sin*; and with regard to our recovery by Jesus Christ, we are told, *there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby they can be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. These texts, with many others which might be produced, sufficiently prove, that mankind by nature are in a state of separation from God, and that their salvation is entirely owing to the Lord Jesus Christ, without their works or performances.

As I have the authority of the bible, I have also the authority of our own church, which, I trust, I shall always honour and revere next to the word of God.

In her ninth article, intitled, *Of original or birth sin*, she declares, "That man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into the world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation."

This is our church's system of natural religion.



In her tenth article of *free-will*, she tells us her opinion of moral agency, so much contended for of late.

“ The condition of Man after the fall of *Adam* is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God ; wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.”

And that justification by faith alone is the doctrine of the church of *England*, she convinces us in her eleventh article of the *justification of man*.

“ We are accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through faith, and not for our own works or deservings ; wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the homily of justification.”

I must refer those who are desirous of farther evidence, to the excellent homilies of our church, where they will find these great truths frequently and strongly inculcated ; more especially in the first *homily on fasting*, in the *two sermons on salvation by Christ*, and in the first *homily on good works annexed to faith* : these evidences ought to be ad-

mitted by us as strong proofs, because we have all subscribed, and solemnly engaged to abide by them.

We see, then, that preaching justification by works is no part of a minister's duty. I mean not to decry a life of piety and holiness, God forbid; I mean, (as I am taught by our own church) that we are justified by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus. Faith is the instrument by which this justification is applied to the soul, and works are the fruit and sign of the genuineness of our faith. It is plain, works can have no hand in our justification; because we are expressly told, that of ourselves we can do no good works. We cannot be justified by works, because we can do no good works till we are justified. They are the fruit of the Spirit of God working in the hearts of all his people, inclining them *both to will and do of his good pleasure*. Thus we are told in the twelfth article, that good works are the *fruits of faith, and do follow after* (not go before) *they follow after justification*; and even then they *cannot endure the severity of God's judgment*; yet, being the consequence of justifying faith, *they are pleasing and acceptable to God*. But then I would observe, that by faith I do not mean a bare belief, (the Devils have this) but a principle wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit of God enabling the sinner to see his sins pardoned, and leading him into all holiness of heart and life.

In

In support of this, I appeal to the *homily on Easter-day*, and to the *sermons on the sacraments*.

Works then are the consequence of a justifying faith; and, for a minister to preach up works to a congregation who have experienced nothing of the love of Jesus on their souls, is full as absurd as to begin to build at the top, without laying the foundation.

But a *late apologist for the clergy* hath told us, (what, I am sure, I should never have dreamed of) that we are to take it for granted, that all our hearers are *sincere believers* in Jesus Christ. Now, for my part, I cannot take this for granted. I heartily wish that one in fifty was a sincere believer. Believe they may as the devils do, but this is not faith; I can look upon no man to be a sincere believer in Jesus, but one whose heart is changed, who has felt the weight of sin, and has experienced, or, at least, is desirous of experiencing the pardon of God to his soul: but I cannot look on those to be sincere believers, who, though they make an outward profession, have never felt the power of the gospel in their hearts, nor shew the fruits of it in their lives and conversations; for, as our 12th article expresses, “By these works a lively faith is as clearly discerned, as a tree is known by its fruits.”

These, my brethren, are the doctrines we are bound to preach: this, namely, free salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, is the doctrine poor sinners want, and what they would gladly flock to hear.



These doctrines it is our duty to preach with all diligence; we are to propose them to our people, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. We are not to fear the face of man: we must expect opposition from the men of this world, if we preach the gospel in sincerity. Our master himself gave offence, his Apostles gave offence, and all his ministers, who have dared to preach free salvation by his name, have always given offence. But, notwithstanding the opposition we are sure to meet with from carnal men, we must resolve to go on, and *preach the word with all boldness*. If we fear the face of man, we can never perform what is required of us. We must fear *no man's person*, but declare unto all *the whole counsel of God, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear*.

But in order to speak the word with power, we must experience, or, at least, desire to experience these things in our own hearts. When the word goes from the heart it will always reach the heart. Oh! how powerfully will the gospel of Jesus prevail over all opposition, when it comes from the heart of the preacher.

Again, if we desire the *word spoken by us* should take effect, we must be *instant in season and out of season*. We must omit no opportunity of inviting sinners to God, we must make it our *meat and drink to do the will of him that sent us*. The minister of Christ is always in his element when he is inviting sinners to return to his blessed master.

Converting

Converting souls, and not *lording it over God's heritage*, is the duty of a christian preacher; and, indeed, if our own hearts are *sprinkled with the blood of Jesus*, we shall desire nothing so earnestly as to feed the flock of God with the sincere milk of the word; we shall not want to bask in the dignities and preferments of the church, but shall be willing to *spend and be spent* in our blessed master's service; we shall not think we have discharged our duty by having performed some few outward services, but shall ever be employed in our master's business. And if we are not thus employed we are none of his servants. We may bear his name, it is true, but unless we are diligent to *publish the glad tidings of salvation* by Jesus Christ, *we are bastards, and not sons*; we may profess to serve God, but we are all the while serving our own belly.

Once more. It is our indispensable duty to recommend our doctrine by our lives and conversations. Whatever may have been our practice before we were converted, being once persuaded of the truths of the gospel, we are bound to embrace them, and become patterns to our flock *in all bouness of conversation*.

Thus have I pointed out some few of the duties required of a gospel minister; and *who is sufficient for these things?* No one in his own strength, none but such as are assisted by the good spirit of God. Our office, my brethren, requires great things of us; and we have great reason to beg God's directions,

rections, that we may be able to discharge it aright. This brings me, as I proposed, to apply what has been said to ourselves.

And now, my brethren, are we *pure from the blood of all men*? Let us lay our hands on our hearts, and ask ourselves the question; and may the eternal God, in whose presence we are, enable us to answer aright! do we preach free salvation by Jesus Christ, or do we preach for doctrine the commandments of men? We have all solemnly engaged to preach free salvation by Jesus Christ, *without man's merits or deservings*. I would lay a greater stress upon this, because this doctrine is grown into great disrepute of late; and some men are not only contented to neglect these great truths, but have the assurance to brand them with enthusiasm. How they can reconcile this with their oaths and subscriptions they are to determine; reconcile it to the word of God they cannot.

'Tis a general complaint, that our churches are less frequented than they used formerly to be, and that a degeneracy of manners universally prevails. Now I may venture to affirm, that the moral preaching, so much in vogue, is the cause of all this. In short, we have preached morality so long, that we have hardly any morality left; and this moral preaching has made our people so very immoral, that there are no lengths of wickedness which they are afraid of running into. And how should it be otherwise? We have forsaken the christian doctrines, *the fountain of living waters,*



and have *hewed to ourselves broken cisterns which will hold no water.*

Justification by Christ alone, as I have already observed, is the doctrine of the gospel and of our own church, and never, till within a century ago, had those who call themselves ministers the face to contradict it.

Preaching works arose from hence: in the grand rebellion, when religion was made a stalking horse to serve the blackest and most diabolical purposes, many persons concerned in it perverted the christian doctrine of justification by faith, and asserted, that believing only in the name of Jesus would entitle them to eternal joys. This was downright antinomianism. Some faithful ministers thought it their duty to stem this torrent of iniquity, and to declare in all their discourses, that that could be no true faith in Christ which was unattended with its proper fruits. This method of preaching was soon abused, and, at last, paved the way for the present method of preaching justification by works; and so, in order to avoid antinomianism, we are at last run into *rank arminianism*; and I am sorry to say, the *arminian* doctrine of justification by works has too long prevailed among us, and it is high time it should be exploded. I am sure it is counterfeit divinity, and will never pass current in the court of heaven. It has indeed been a long time established among us, and the learned Dr. Edwards, in the second volume of his Preacher, complains

complains of it. His words are these: " That  
" there is a great declension from the primitive  
" truths is too manifest to be concealed; yea, and  
" the persons concerned do not desire it should be  
" concealed; for they proclaim it to the world,  
" and therefore they cannot complain that I have  
" done them any wrong. The writings and discourses of our divines bear witness daily, that  
" the *arminian* points are their delight, and these  
" they are continually cultivating and bringing  
" to perfection. Remonstrantism is espoused by  
" our chiefs, it appears in a canonical habit, it is  
" voted to be orthodox, and it even passes for the  
" articles of our church. Nothing will go down  
" with the bulk of our clergy but this. All other  
" doctrines are esteemed by them as a religious  
" and better sort of canting and gibberish; and  
" yet, by the way, it is observable, what good  
" company these gentlemen keep, Pelagians, Papists, and Socinians; these, all along in their  
" several tenets, are their associates, their comrades, and their friends, whom yet at other  
" times, they pretend to dislike, and hold no correspondence with, yea, they seem to shew a  
" great antipathy against them; but, it seems,  
" they can unite very peaceably in their doctrines,  
" which I wish may not be a presage and forerunner of their joining in more. God grant  
" that the persons who are most concerned in this  
" discourse may seriously consider what I have  
" said

“ said before it be too late.” Thus far this great and good divine.

If we believe the scriptures, if we pay the least regard to our own church, if we attend to the words already quoted, we must be sensible, that preaching justification by works is indeed an unchristian and a most *damnable doctrine*; in short, it is downright popery. Justification by works is not the protestant but popish doctrine.

If we neglect to preach the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone, without mincing the matter, we are guilty of perjury. Those who make a conscience of their oaths and subscriptions will not be offended at this plainness of speech: those, who do not, ought to be told of it; and, I pray, God convert them.

I observed before, that this doctrine has been branded with the name of enthusiasm. I shall convince you of the absurdity of this notion in the words of the divine above-mentioned.

“ Consider how unreasonable it is to cry out  
“ against new lights, to profess our dislike of in-  
“ novations, to condemn the giddy sectaries for  
“ turning about with every wind of doctrine, and  
“ yet to be really guilty of this ourselves. *Armi-*  
“ *nianism* is a new scheme of religion, which de-  
“ faces the antient portraiture we had of the di-  
“ vine nature and attributes; it is a new fashion,  
“ and mode of divinity; and yet we boast that  
“ our faith is immoveable, that we stand fast and



“ keep our ground, and are fixed on our centre,  
 “ whilst others fly off from it, and describe a very  
 “ vagrant circumference. Our churchmen gene-  
 “ rally talk of antiquity, and what fine things  
 “ there were of old in the primitive times, and  
 “ they are displeased with those that shew any dif-  
 “ like to them : but how self-condemned are they  
 “ whilst they revolt from some of the antient  
 “ doctrines of the Apostles and primitive chris-  
 “ tians, from the persuasion of all the prelates  
 “ and divines of our church that were our pre-  
 “ decessors since the reformation, and from the  
 “ determination of the first reformed churches  
 “ abroad. Where then is our stability, where  
 “ then is our immoveableness, where is our ab-  
 “ horrence of innovations ?”

I hope I have now given sufficient proofs for  
 what I have advanced, *viz.* that it is our indispen-  
 sable duty to preach the plain doctrines of the  
 gospel, without the *enticing words of man's wisdom*.  
 Let us therefore ask ourselves, do we make a con-  
 science of these things ? Do we, in short, make a  
 conscience of our profession ? do we make it our  
 study in every thing to *approve ourselves unto God*,  
 and to save the souls committed to us ?—God for-  
 give us all ; for here, I am sure, we are greatly  
 deficient. O ! let us implore the spirit of God,  
*lest by any means, after we have preached to others,*  
*we ourselves should become castaways.*

Again,

Again, are we half so eager to hunt for souls as we are to hunt after preferment? And here what a mean and scandalous thing it is for those who are honoured with a commission from God, and who are to stand between him and his people, to be dangling at the heels of a man in power for a little paltry promotion. And for this reason the word of the Lord by the prophet is come upon us, *therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people*—And are we not become base and contemptible before the people, by departing from the *commandment given unto us*, and by running after the error of *Balaam* for reward? Is not that other prophecy fulfilled upon us, *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money?*

But, to conclude; Let us, my brethren, for God's sake, and the poor soul's sake committed to our charge, resolve, by his grace, to preach *Jesus Christ, and him crucified*; let us remember what a solemn account we must one day make. If we do not preach the gospel in sincerity, how can we appear at God's tremendous bar? What can we say to those poor souls who shall be deluded by our false and pernicious doctrines, if they perish through our neglect? They will justly say unto us, in the presence of men and angels, We lay our damnation at your door, ye pharisaical teachers, who have *withholden from us the good word of life*; you

you never told us of the danger we were in ; you amused us with a detail of our fancied perfections, and never shewed us the way to a crucified Redeemer. They indeed *shall die in their iniquities, but their blood will God require at our hands.*

This, surely, if we believe any thing, unless we only make a trade of our profession, this, surely, is enough to make the stoutest of us tremble.

Thus have I gone through with what I proposed. Whether I have said enough to move you I know not ; sure I am, I have said enough to terrify myself, and to stand abashed and confounded before the face of God. *Prudence*, indeed, might have dictated to me not to have spoken so plainly, for fear of giving offence ; but, if I should be afraid of speaking the truth, good God ! what greater cause have those to fear who falsify their oaths, betray their master, and lead millions of souls into everlasting destruction ?—Lord Jesus remove the veil from their hearts, and convince them of their danger before it be too late !

One word to the congregation, and I have done.

You have heard, my brethren, with what freedom I have addressed those of my own profession, bear then with the same plainness to yourselves. Remember to esteem and honour those who labour among you *in the word of God and doctrine.* You see what great things are required of us. It is  
your



your duty to pray for us, that *we faint not. We have a treasure* committed to us, 'tis true, but we have it *in earthen vessels.* Remember this, and pity our infirmities, considering that we also are men, subject to like passions with yourselves. Many of you are glad of an opportunity to revile the ministers of the gospel, pay no regard to their admonitions, but despise their counsel; but you will do well to remember, that whoever *despisetb us, despisetb him that sent us.* I shall now desire all here present to join their hearts with mine in solemn prayer to God for his blessing on the ministers of the gospel; which we may do in the words of our own church in her ordination service.

“ Almighty God and most merciful Father,  
“ who, of thine infinite goodness, hast given  
“ thine only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ  
“ to be our Redeemer, and the author of ever-  
“ lasting life, who, after that he had made per-  
“ fect our redemption by his death, and was as-  
“ cended into heaven, poured down his gifts  
“ abundantly upon men, making *some apostles,*  
“ *some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and*  
“ *doctors, to the edifying* and making perfect his  
“ church; grant, we beseech thee, to us thy  
“ faithful servants, grace, that we may be ever-  
“ more ready to spread abroad thy gospel, the  
“ glad tidings of reconciliation with thee, and  
“ use the authority given us, not to destruction  
“ but to salvation, not to hurt but to help; so

A a

“ that

" that, as wise and faithful servants, giving to thy  
 " family their portion in due season, we may at last  
 " be received into everlasting joy, through Jesus  
 " Christ our Lord, who, with Thee and the Holy  
 " Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God, world  
 " without end. *Amen.*"

370  
A Vision Sermon.  
" that to wife and faithful servants, giving to the  
" family their portion in the Kingdom we may at last  
" be received into everlasting joy, through Jesus  
" Christ our Lord, who, with Thee and the Holy  
" Ghost, livest and reignest ever one God, world  
" without end. Amen.  
A

# CHARITY-SERMON

PREACHED AT

St. *BOTOLPH*, BISHOPSGATE,

On SUNDAY, *November 24*, 1754,

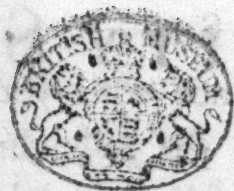
AT THE

OPENING of the said CHURCH.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

Published at the Request of the RECTOR.





CHARLES HERMON  
I have published  
knowledge  
for  
have now  
you shall find  
On Sunday, August 14, 1734  
you must  
tell you  
own mind  
testimony of the said CHURCH  
of our own  
As we were  
divine service  
published at the Request of the Rector  
the person was  
extraordinary  
things I could not  
some think it  
what your objections are  
As 23

T O T H E  
 R E C T O R of St. *Botolph, Bishopsgate.*

REVEREND SIR,

**I**N compliance with your request, I have published the following Sermon. I acknowledge myself accountable to you (as rector) for what I advanced in your pulpit : and you have now an opportunity of *confuting* whatever you shall find contrary to *sound Doctrine* ; but you must at the same time give me leave to tell you, that I am fully persuaded, in my own mind, that I have advanced nothing contrary to the gospel of Christ, and the doctrines of our own church.

As you were pleased to direct me (during divine service) to take care how I advanced any thing contrary thereto ; and did, after the Sermon was over, accuse me, in a very extraordinary manner, of having asserted many things I could not defend ; you will, I presume, think it incumbent on you to shew what your objections are.

# 374 DEDICATION.

As this sermon would never have made its appearance in print, unless you yourself had desired it; you will therefore, I hope, pass over with candour the inelegancies of the composition, and consider only whether the doctrine be true or false.

I shall say nothing of the very unchristian treatment I met with from you on the day I delivered this discourse, but shall take my leave, with praying the great and adorable God *to lead you with his good Spirit*, and to direct you *in the way according to godliness*. I am,

REVEREND SIR,

*Your very humble Servant,*

T. JONES.



# S E R M O N

## O N

PSALM xlviii. 9.

*We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.*

In verse the 8th the other translation runs thus :

*We wait for thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst, &c.*

**T**HIS was the language of a very great and powerful monarch, who, at the same time that he presided over a great and flourishing kingdom, and had abundance of soldiers and servants under him, and could say unto one man go, and he went, and to another come, and he came; was so far from being puffed up, and conceited with these great privileges, that we frequently find him acknowledging the divine and merciful hand, that raised him to this degree of magnificence, and confessing his unworthiness of the blessings he received. He did not, what too many of our modern infidels do, ascribe his prosperity to chance, fortune, or his own industry

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and merit, but always resolved the whole into the love and goodness of his God.

When this great man was persecuted and derided by his own subjects, (like the true David he was designed to represent) when he was reviled, he reviled not again. He was often affected with a sense of his infirmities, and as often repaired to the throne of grace, for help and assistance. He was sensible of the danger his exalted station exposed him to, and accordingly looked up to God, for a constant supply of his grace, to enable him to do what was pleasing in his sight.

This is the difference between the children of God, and the men of this world: the former know too well their own weakness and insufficiency to trust to themselves; for which reason they place their whole trust and confidence in God, and are accordingly aided and supported by him; and the latter, full of themselves, conceited with their own abilities, think it beneath them to call upon God; and therefore generally perish in the work of their own hands. But it was the peculiar happiness of David to be taught of God, he was led by his Spirit, he knew too well where his help was laid, not to have recourse to it whenever he was in any distress or trouble. As he was thus enabled by divine grace *to rule his people prudently*, and to manage all his temporal concerns with discretion; so, by the same powerful principle, was he directed to look forward to a happy eternity.

He

He looked forward by faith to Jesus Christ, the great sacrifice, who was to appear, and thereby made his *calling and election sure*.

David, whatever some may imagine to the contrary, was a sincere *christian*, and believed in Christ, who was to come: all the difference between the believing Jews, before our Lord's advent, and sincere *christians*, since that, is, that the former believed in Christ who was to come, whereas the latter believe in Christ who is to come. David, as well as Abraham, *rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and he saw it and was glad*. Nay, David himself was a remarkable type of Christ. He was one of those worthies St. Paul speaks of, who *died in faith*. He looked up to *that rock which followed his forefathers, and that rock was Christ*. Throughout his book of Psalms, Christ and his church are pointed out and described: In this psalm he describes the advantages arising from the redemption of man by Jesus Christ; and sets forth the peculiar ornaments and graces of his church, under the type of the Jewish temple; in the 9th verse he declares what blessings the faithful expected therein; *we have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple*.

These words I have selected for your present meditations, and hope they will furnish us with no unuseful reflections on this occasion.

May therefore the holy and eternal Spirit incline all our hearts to an humble dependance on him,

him, that we may wait for, and receive the loving kindness of the Lord, in the midst of his temple!

In my following discourse I shall endeavour to shew,

I. What it is the church of God, by the mouth of David, professed to expect, *the loving kindness of God.*

II. Where this loving kindness was to be met with, *in his temple. We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.*

*First,* Then, I am to shew what the church of Christ, by the mouth of David in this psalm, professed to expect; even the *loving kindness of the Lord.* We have thought of, or, we *wait* for, thy loving kindness, O God. His loving kindness then, desired and prayed for, was, pardon of their sins, and eternal life. They not only expected temporal blessings, but also depended on Christ, who was to come, for redemption and salvation.

It has been indeed supposed, that the Jews looked no farther than this life; that they were bid to expect temporal blessings only. But can it be supposed, that the eternal God, who had designed the redemption of mankind from the beginning, would not reveal it to them, to whom he so manifestly displayed himself?

Is it natural to suppose, that those men, whom he owned as his faithful and beloved servants, should be strangers to his gracious intentions; that  
the



the *Israelites* (the obedient Jews I mean) should undergo such a variety of hardships, in the prospect of earthly happiness only ; especially, seeing great part of their lives would be spent in attaining that happiness, when, by reason of age and infirmity, they would hardly be in a condition to enjoy it? Surely no. The temporal blessings proposed to them, on their obedience to God's law, were types or figures of that eternal happiness Christ Jesus was to purchase for those who would repose a settled faith and trust in him ; to this great end did all their sacrifices and services tend. The hardships they underwent, the afflictions and trials they met with, were too striking a picture of the calamities incident to human life, for them to expect any real happiness from any thing here below.

The peaceable enjoyment of the *land of promise*, represented the *rest* reserved for the *people of God*, in too strong and lively colours, for them not to see where they were to fix their hopes and desires. However unfashionable this doctrine may appear, it is nevertheless the determination of our own church, in her seventh article.

[“ The Old Testament is not contrary to the  
“ New : for both in the Old and New Testament,  
“ everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ,  
“ who is the only mediator between God and  
“ man, being both God and man : wherefore  
“ they are not to be heard, which feign, that the  
“ old

“old fathers did look only for transitory profits.”]

This too is the language of scripture; for throughout the New Testament (which I look upon to be the best commentary on the Old) the sacrifices and services of the Jewish law are appropriated to Christ; the Book of Psalms is particularly applied to him and his church: nor is there a single passage quoted out of the Psalms, but what is mentioned and applied as relating to him.

Christ himself declared, that he must fulfil all things which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning him.

Farther, if it be true, as our own church, and the holy scriptures have determined, that all mankind fell with Adam; and that *there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby they can be saved, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, it will appear highly necessary, that the patriarchs and fathers under the law, should have had a comfortable prospect of that redemption; it was revealed to man, immediately after his fall, was continued and handed down to the true Israelites, in various types and prophecies, and at last fully compleated by the coming of *Christ in the flesh*.

The author to the Hebrews has asserted, that many of the old worthies *died in faith*; that their doing acceptable service to God, was entirely owing

ing to their faith ; and a greater than he has told us, that *Abraham rejoiced to see his day, he saw it and was glad.*

This day of redemption the believing Jews looked for and expected ; they did not pretend to challenge eternal happiness by their own works (as too many who call themselves *christians* now do) but depended on Christ for salvation. This was the loving kindness they thought of, and waited for. They were sensible they were sinners, they knew they had incurred the displeasure of God, but they did not go about to pacify his wrath in their own strength ; but offered sacrifices and oblations to make atonement for their transgressions. These sacrifices were emblems or pictures of the grand and all-atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ ; and the Jews understood them in this sense ; nor can the various institutions and ceremonies of the Jewish law, their offerings, washings, purifications, and many other appointments, be any otherwise accounted for, than as they were designed to foreshew, by way of figure, the great atonement that was afterwards to appear. A small acquaintance with the original scriptures, will convince any one of this point more fully ; and whoever will read, carefully and attentively, the epistle to the Hebrews, will be confirmed in this opinion.

We see then, that the church of God, by the mouth of David in this psalm, professed to expect



redemption from death, and forgiveness of all their sins. The whole of the Old Testament was designed, either to keep that people from idolatry, or to point out and describe the Lord Jesus Christ, in his various offices and relations to his church. This was the *loving kindness* they thought of in the temple of Jehovah; and a loving kindness it surely is, for God to take compassion on his sinful rebellious creatures: and to find out a way of eternal salvation for them, was surely a *love that passeth knowledge*. This, my brethren, is the *loving kindness* David prayed for, and this is what we must meet with if ever we are saved. We must have an interest (let the infidel and profane say what they please, let them deride the doctrine as much as they will) in our blessed Redeemer, if ever we expect to see God.

The *loving kindness* in the text implies indeed *all* spiritual blessings, pardon of sins, and promise of glory. When man was revolted from God, and had no place of safety to flee unto, the amazing love of our merciful Redeemer manifested and displayed itself. *Eternal life, that free gift of God*, was what the believing Jews earnestly sought after. This gift is still ready to be dispensed to all those who are prepared thankfully to receive it. O that all here present may be so wise as to embrace it! but then we must remember, that we have it not in our own power, to give ourselves this loving kindness; we must not set up for our  
own

own saviours. We must be saved in the way and manner God has appointed ; or be lost for ever.

Which brings me to shew, in the *second* place, Where this loving kindness is to be met with ; in God's temple. *We have thought of thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of thy temple.*

We have already observed, that by loving kindness is here meant, that remarkable loving kindness of God, in redeeming man from sin and death. It does not indeed preclude temporal blessings, nor is it only confined to them. The love of God carries with it the *promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come* : this dispensation of mercy they were to wait for, and receive in the temple of *Jehovah* ; here it was their public services were to be paid.

The temple, under that law, was appointed by God himself ; and the *Jews* were commanded to perform all acts of public worship in the place where the Lord their God had chosen to *put his name*. Now we are not to imagine, that eternal salvation was confined only to the temple, as a temple made with hands ; that it was in regard of the building, or outward ornaments of it, that they were to be accepted ; nor even in regard of the very ordinances themselves : for we are told, that *the blood of bullocks and goats could never of themselves take away sin*. Something higher, then, is intended in all this. This temple is Christ, it is in Christ alone we are to wait for the loving kindness

kindness of the Lord. That the temple was a type of Christ's body, is a known truth. Our Redeemer himself uses the very expression, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*

The tabernacle we know, (after the model of which the temple was built) was described to Moses by God himself. *See thou make every thing (saith he) according to the pattern which I shewed unto thee in the mount.*

Here their public worship was solemnized, to inform them, that all their prayers and supplications were to be offered up, through the merits of Christ; here their sacrifices were brought, intimating, that without *shedding the blood of Christ Jesus there was no remission.*

It would take up more time, than the present opportunity will allow, to describe the several parts of the Jewish temple, and to shew the relation they bore to Christ: The 9th chapter to the Hebrews dwells very much upon this; we have a general description of the tabernacle, or temple, in the five first verses of that chapter. *Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread, which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid round about with gold; wherein was the golden pot, that had manna; and*



*and Aaron's rod that budded; and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory, shadowing the mercy-seat, of which we cannot now speak particularly.* All these were remarkably descriptive of the christian system.

I shall only mention at present the Holy of Holies. This was a known type of heaven. The high priest, who entered into it once a year, denoted the entrance of Jesus Christ, our gospel high priest, into heaven itself, the true Holy of Holies, to obtain eternal redemption for all his faithful servants. The cherubims on the mercy-seat, were an hieroglyphical representation of the adorable trinity; and as the high priest offered incense before those emblematical faces, so does Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, offer the incense of his merits, before the real faces in heaven. The Holy of Holies, with its appurtenance, is expressly called by the Apostle the pattern of heaven; for speaking of their being sprinkled with blood,

He saith, *It was therefore necessary, that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* So in applying this to Christ, he saith, *now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went*

*the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest; while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present.*

And again, *Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* This last passage, I think, clearly shews the design of the temple under the law. We see then, that the fathers under the law expected eternal redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ, *as they waited in the temple, which was a figure of the true tabernacle not made with hands: so are we to depend intirely on his merits for pardon and salvation.*

Christ's manhood is the temple, where God's altar is erected. Whoever partakes of this altar, shall be cleansed and sanctified. We read in the law, that whoever neglected to go to the temple to worship and make his atonement, was to be cut off from his people; so now, whoever refuses to repair to Christ the living temple, must expect to die in his iniquity.

I am very sensible, that this doctrine gives great offence to the *self-righteous*; to those, who would claim heaven by their own moral virtues. But  
this

this is nevertheless the language of scripture, let them say what they please. A crucified Saviour, to the natural man, has *no form nor comeliness in him, that he should desire him*; he still continues to be *despised and rejected of men*; but to the humbled and converted soul he is a Redeemer, *mighty to save*. To this living temple, my brethren, let us all repair; to this true sanctuary, *which the Lord pitched and not man*. The doors of this temple are ever open to receive all, who come in faith and humility. *I am the door, saith Christ; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and go in and out and find pasture*. This is the only city of refuge we have to flee unto, when the *avenger of blood pursues us at our heels*. When all earthly comforts fail, the sense of Christ's redeeming love will fill us with all *joy and peace in believing*. If we are *dead in trespasses and sins*, he will not fail to rouse us, with an, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*. When our consciences present us with a black catalogue of crimes, when we are oppressed with the weight of sin, upon our sincere repentance, he will speak peace to our souls; *he will not remember the sins and offences of our youth, but according to his mercy will he think upon us for his goodness*. He will remove far from us our sins and iniquities; he will strip us of the filthy garments of our own wickedness, and he will clothe us with the *robes of his righteousness and salvation*. Let us then draw nigh



to our Redeemer, and he will draw nigh to us. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. He knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust. Turn ye then unto the Lord Jesus, for he will have mercy upon you, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon. *Whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out.*

This is the happiness attending the christian religion: comfort here, and glory hereafter. Here we have balm for all our wounds. All systems of man's invention fall very short of the end they propose; but in the religion of the cross, in that dispensation which is brought to light through the gospel, mercy and justice have met together, righteousness and peace [or reconciliation] have kissed each other.

As the words of the text have been fully considered, with regard to their spiritual meaning, I would beg leave to add a word or two upon them, in their literal sense.

*Let us wait for the loving kindness of the Lord in his temple,* i. e. let us use the outward ordinances and means he himself has appointed. Public worship is a principal means which we have in our power, of declaring to all the world that we are christians. If the Jews were commanded to repair constantly to their temple, where the redemption of mankind was figured in miniature only; we certainly are bound to attend on God's service, who have it described in full proportion. Be constant

stant then in your attendance at God's holy temple, where he more immediately delights to dwell. *Reverence his sanctuary*; for altho' we do not, (as some would insinuate) ascribe any inherent holiness to these places, which are set apart for divine worship, yet most certainly, so far as they are consecrated to his service, they have a relative holiness at least.

The temple under the law was really holy, being of God's appointment; and, in every minute particular, typical and descriptive of the christian scheme. But common decency will dictate a becoming veneration for the house of God.

What I would at present inculcate is, your constant attendance at this holy place. As you have repaired and beautified your church, let me advise you to resort to it. It is not the adorning the place, it is not saying, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord*, that will stand you in any stead, unless you attend on his holy ordinances dispensed therein. The general neglect of public worship, is a scandal to this people and nation.

If a poor *Indian* could be made acquainted with the great and glorious privileges of the gospel, what would he give for the opportunities afforded you? How glad would he be, if any should say unto him, *We will go into the house of the Lord*. Will not then these unenlightened souls rise up in judgment against you, and condemn you, if you neglect so great salvation? Is it not a disgrace to every one, who



who calls himself a christian, to be so eager in resorting to places of public diversions, and at the same time so cold and remiss, so indifferent about attending on the worship of God? Is it for this, our God has sent the knowledge of his salvation to this island? Is it for this, that he has preserved to us the purest religion? *O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon.*

Let me advise you, for your own sakes, *not to forget the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.* Be constant in your attendance in this place; and when you are here, consider whose presence you are in. Remember, that the great and tremendous God, before whose face mountains melt, and the perpetual hills do bow, is now in this place. He sees the inmost thoughts and recesses of your souls. He sees whether you come with an humble faith, and desire of being strengthened and assisted in your christian progress; or only to criticise on what you hear, and by that means *reject the word of God against yourselves.*

Let this consideration then excite you to a becoming seriousness and devotion at duties. By this means your hearts will be warmed with the love of God, and you will receive the comfortable witness of it to yourselves. Be not contented with an outside formal shew of religion; but beg of God to give you the religion of the heart. It is  
not



not the being members of the best church, that will stand you in any stead, unless it be a means of uniting you to God. Be not contented then to rest in the outward courts, but press into the Holy of Holies. We must serve the Lord our Redeemer, in a living temple, renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost; let us implore his divine influence, that we may become tabernacles of his grace; that Christ our Saviour may be offered up, in humble faith and holy love, on the altar of all our hearts.

Before I conclude I must inform you, that there will be a collection for the support of these poor children, these little members of Christ's church, who wait for your loving kindness in the midst of God's temple. You are the instruments designed to convey this loving kindness to them. You, who are christians, will contribute to their relief, because you are commanded to do it; it is your indispensable duty. You who imagine there is any merit in acts of this nature, are to do as you please; you will give, I suppose, from your own principles. Remember, however, that if you value yourselves on these performances, you set up for your own Saviours; and your very *prayers will be an abomination to the Lord.*

But I now address myself to the christian part of this congregation. I desire you to convince all unbelievers of the sincerity of your profession, and shew the fruits of your faith, by a liberal contribution

bution (if in your power) to your poor suffering brethren; even as God for Christ's sake has had pity on you.

You may observe, that at the dedication of the temple, the people made a *willing offering unto the Lord their God*: let me advise you to be influenced by their example, and in compliance with your dear Redeemer's command, *Go and do likewise*.

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